

07 JUL 2001

Mahathir-Opposition

PM LABELS "BARISAN ALTERNATIF" AS AN IMITATION FRONT

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today labelled the four-party "Barisan Alternatif" opposition alliance as an "imitation front" which has failed to copy the Barisan Nasional (BN) concept of cooperation due to the insincerity and deceit of the respective parties.

The prime minister said that the BN (National Front) was a unique coalition of 13 component parties as it had succeeded in forging strong cooperation which had endured over the years and recognised by the outside world.

"It seems that all this while the opposition parties have been observing the outcome of the BN style of cooperation and now strive to embrace each other to forge an alliance even though they are fierce enemies, never having a common goal.

"For as long as they fail to cooperate, these opposition parties cannot possibly defeat the BN. In the 2004 election, we will say goodbye to the imitation front. Imitation goods are never of quality," he said in his keynote address at the one-day Fourth BN Convention at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

The opposition alliance calling itself the "Barisan Alternatif" (Alternative Front) comprises PAS, DAP, Keadilan and PRM.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said that the intention of the opposition alliance to copy the approaches adopted by the BN had failed because they only use each other in the interest of their respective parties.

He said that Keadilan, for instance, was even prepared to allow itself to be deceived by PAS and DAP.

"It's most shameful as far as Keadilan is concerned. The world thinks that this is the party which is going to replace Umno. It's only a dream...dreaming in the daytime.

"What is actually happening is that the DAP and PAS are trying to use Keadilan to win the support of certain quarters for their respective parties and today we can see how PAS has succeeded in using Keadilan," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the DAP also had not escaped from being used by PAS but the DAP had not realised that the Chinese community had rejected the party because of its cooperation with PAS.

He said this was proven when DAP top leaders Lim Kit Siang and Karpal Singh lost in the 1999 general election.

"PAS leaders are very cunning...they managed to use the DAP. They embraced Kit Siang physically...in actual fact they are using Kit Siang," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that PAS' actions in using its partners in the opposition alliance had resulted in the DAP being ousted as opposition leader in the Dewan Rakyat with Lim being replaced by PAS president Datuk Fadzil Nor.

"Even the seats have changed. I believe the DAP's existence has ended... goodbye DAP. For as long the DAP allows itself to be used by PAS, the party will not survive," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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