

07 JAN 2002

Mahathir-Discipline

DISCIPLINE IS IMPORTANT IN IMPROVING ADMINISTRATION, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said it is important for the Public Services to always uphold discipline in order to improve the administration.

He said discipline, as in other virtues like professionalism, efficiency and trustworthiness, would go a long way in determining how effective an administration would be.

"There is a lot of good things in obeying orders, eventhough sometimes the order may sound stupid," he said when he addressed the third series of the premier civil service assembly at the National Institute of Public Administration (Intan) in Bukit Kiara, here.

Dr Mahathir recounted how 600 British mounted soldiers, following an order from their leader, charged into a valley of death where 2,000 Russian soldiers were waiting with guns, knowing very well all of them would be killed.

"It is a wrong order but if they did not charge, they would be gunned down," he said, adding the action of the British soldiers had earned them respect from the people.

Dr Mahathir said: "I make decisions that sound stupid to others."

"Sometimes it appears odd, but it is good to carry out (the orders) with discipline. We will fail if we don't carry out. Professionalism and discipline in carrying out orders have made us what we are now," he said.

He cited as an example the implementation of the national car project, which was initially said to be a stupid idea but now had produced results.

Dr Mahathir also said the Public Services needed to be continuously improved, updated and upgraded so that its services were in line with the development and progress of the world.

He said district officers previously had acted like "Rajas" but now they had to go down to the grassroots to get close to the rakyat and understand their problems.

Commenting on a book harping on his differences with the late Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dr Mahathir said he appreciated what the first prime minister had to do during his tenure then.

"I was young at that time. (I) was impatient," describing the reasons for differences between them, and added, "Tunku was patient and cool."

-- BERNAMA

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