

15 SEP 2003

Mahathir-Promises

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PLEDGES TO FULFIL ALL ITS PROMISES

PASIR MAS, Sept 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad pledged today that the Barisan Nasional (BN) government will strive to develop the country including PAS-ruled Kelantan and Terengganu to ensure the well-being of the people who have chosen the coalition to rule the country since independence.

The Prime Minister said that since the people had placed their trust in the BN government, it would undertake all its responsibilities to fulfil its pledge and promises.

"As we all know, as Muslims, we have to fulfil all our promises and knowing that we cannot possibly fulfil them, then it would be better for us not to make any promises.

"That is why when the federal government make promises, we strive to fulfil all our promises and proof of this can be seen throughout the country," he said at the launching of the Sultan Ismail Petra bridge in Tendong here.

The 960-metre bridge built by the federal government at a cost of RM166 million was launched by the Sultan of Kelantan.

It is the third bridge built spanning the Kelantan River.

Dr Mahathir said that the construction of the bridge was another proof that the federal government had prioritized projects for the people including those in Kelantan and Terengganu.

He also said that the country's successes in its development which had been accorded world recognition were due to the integrity of the present government which was chosen by the people.

The Prime Minister however reminded the people not to abuse their democratic rights in choosing the government because not all parties forming the government could fulfil their promises to develop the country.

"Don't think that any party forming the government could ensure the country's progress. Actually, if we were to look around we will notice that not all governments could develop their countries.

"That's because the governments have not been chosen with wisdom, those elected are not capable and as such the government could not possibly carry out development," he said.

The Prime Minister said that even though the people in the country had been wise in choosing a government of integrity in the previous elections, they sometimes make wrong decisions after being swayed by empty promises, by those with glib tongue who make baseless allegations against the BN government.

As such, he said, the people should look back to see which government had fulfilled its promises and which government had not.

"This is very important because everytime we have an election, various promises will be made. But we should ask ourselves whether the promises made before have been fulfilled," he said.

Dr Mahathir admitted that several promises made by the federal government had yet to be met, like the plans to set up the Eastern Corridor involving Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang due to lack of cooperation of the PAS-ruled states.

The Prime Minister also criticised the Kelantan and Terengganu governments which had neglected in implementing development in the respective states and instead leave such responsibility to the federal government.

He said that this was an irresponsible attitude as the two state governments had been chosen by the people but the BN had to carry out development instead even though the party had been defeated in the two states.

The Prime Minister also called on the people to be grateful to the federal government which had carried out various development programmes in the country including in Kelantan which received large annual allocations for development in the state.

"The bridge has been built by the federal and BN government and we (Kelantanese) should thank the federal government and not others. This could forge closer ties among us.

"That is why we always call on the people to be grateful and thankful as it is part of Islam. Those who are grateful will reap greater rewards," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that to be grateful and thankful to others does not mean denying God's bounty but such a practice was greatly encouraged in the same manner as we appreciate the contributions and efforts of those who carried out dakwah and traders from West Asia who spread Islam to the country.

"I believe the people in Kelantan are those who know how to be grateful," he said.

Dr Mahathir also called on the people to be grateful to the security forces like the police, armed forces and those who have been entrusted to maintain the nation's security so that the people would be safe and free to move about.

"We are able to gather here (to witness the bridge launching) in a peaceful situation without having any fears, but in other countries, such gatherings could not be held as there could be terrorists who would indiscriminately explode bombs to kill people," he said.

The Prime Minister said that the people should not undermine or belittle the security forces even though at times they could have taken tough actions.

"They could have been tough because we have not heeded their instructions. We should forgive them.

"Let's not utter things that are not nice to them because in actual fact, the peace in our country...free and not living in fear is because of the police, armed forces and other security forces ensuring the country's security," he said.

In his speech, Works Minister Datuk Seri S Samy Vellu said that the federal government would not neglect Kelantan in providing infrastructure facilities because of political differences.

He said that such facilities were provided to ensure economic growth, open new corridors for development and travel convenience between the west and east coast states.

"The federal government is always sensitive to the needs of the people of Kelantan and the public," he said.

Samy Vellu said that the federal government was aware that infrastructure facilities like roads would serve as catalyst for the growth of other sectors specifically the service sector and transportation of goods.

He said that they would boost the progress of the state and the people and as such, under the Eighth Malaysia Plan, a total of RM475.9 million had been allocated to implement 17 road upgrading projects as well as the construction of new roads and bridges in the state.

The projects included the upgrading of the Kota Baharu-Kuala Krai road and the Pasir Puteh-Gong Kulim-Tok Bali road, the construction of the Dabong-Jeli road and the Cherang Ruku-Air Tawar-Sungai Semerak road in

Pasir Puteh, and the construction of a bridge in Bukit Bunga at the Malaysia-Thai border.

Samy Vellu said that the federal government was also implementing the Simpang Pulai-Lojing-Gua Musang-Kuala Berang road project linking Perak, Pahang, Kelantan and Trengganu.

Among the 20,000 people present were Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat and state executive councillors, and federal and state department heads. The Raja Perempuan of Kelantan, the Tengku Mahkota of Kelantan and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali attended the launching.

The foundation-laying ceremony of the bridge project was performed by Dr Mahathir on Nov 26 1999. It is the third bridge spanning the Kelantan River after the Sultan Yahya Petra bridge and the Pasir Mas-Salor bridge.

The three bridges link Kota Baharu with Pasir Mas, Tumpat and Golok in south Thailand through Rantau Panjang.

-- BERNAMA

WM BD RM