

19 JUN 2003

Mahathir-Regime

FORCED REGIME CHANGE COULD HAPPEN IN MALAYSIA, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- Calling on the people to be wary of external developments that could threaten the country, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Malaysia is not excluded from being the target of foreign powers wanting to change its democratic government as had happened in several other nations.

The prime minister said that the foreign powers had tried it before but had failed because the country's leaders were careful and able to avoid falling into their trap.

"Don't think that we will not be targeted. They were disappointed when their former target failed. They will try again," he said when opening the 54th Umno general assembly at the Putra World Trade Centre here today.

The Umno president said that the Europeans, unhappy with Malaysia's success in practising democracy, wanted to see frequent changes of government so that there could be no stability and development could not take place.

Their new slogan was "regime change" but because it did not happen in Malaysia, which remained peaceful and successful, they accused it of being undemocratic and dictatorial, he said.

"Who are they to accuse our government as dictatorial," said Dr Mahathir who defined them as people from Europe, including those who migrated and set up new nations in America, Australia and New Zealand,

"Aren't they the former colonialists whose rule was dictatorial and oppressive and have they not just invaded a weak country, killing many civilians in order to gain power of that country?"

"Is their way of achieving regime change democratic? Look first in the mirror," he said.

The United States and its allies recently invaded Iraq and overthrew President Saddam Hussein, whom Washington disliked, ostensibly to introduce the democratic system in the West Asian nation.

Following the invasion, there were moves for a regime change in Iran and Syria which were also disliked by the west.

Dr Mahathir, who is scheduled to relinquish all his government and political posts in October, said that the problem with the Europeans was that they awarded themselves the right to judge their own views.

However, their criticism of Malaysia might have a hidden agenda to justify their interference in its domestic affairs, he said.

Many people in the country would be influenced by their views and condemn the government, resulting in instability, inability to develop and suffering for the people.

He said that they would condemn this accusation and say that they had no ill intentions, no conspiracy to obstruct anyone's progress.

"But we must not forget that their criticisms, even if baseless, have been used to justify their attack and occupation of a country," he added.

Dr Mahathir said Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was the first person to talk of a regime change because he wanted to replace Palestinian President Yasser Arafat with a leader acceptable to the Tel Aviv regime.

He said that maybe the intention of the Europeans to force the acceptance of democracy was good and they did not plan to damage the developing countries deliberately.

But they forgot the long period of time that they took to understand and benefit from the system.

He also explained at length the need to know the Europeans well because the lives of Malaysians depended on how they interacted with these people and people of their origin.

The prime minister warned the people that the world that they had to face in the new decades and centuries would see numerous attempts by the Europeans to colonise them directly or indirectly.

"If our country is not attacked, our minds, our culture, our religion and other things will become the target," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that based on history, fighting and skills in killing were regarded as honourable by the Europeans and champions among them were given the honorific title "knight".

"The history of Europe is the history of wars, the history of tests of strength. When they came into contact with non-Europeans in Africa, America and Asia, they went to war immediately in order to seize the territories of the local people and to set up new countries and empires."

Dr Mahathir said that today, billions of dollars were being spent to develop more sophisticated weapons and prepare their forces for war when there were no enemies presently, or in the future, which threatened them.

"And they have demonstrated that they are ready to invent false allegations in order to go to war to kill children, old people, sick people and just about anyone and consider all these people as mere collaterals, which cannot be allowed to come in the way of the achievement of their objective," he said.

He said the Europeans hated the Jews even before they embraced Christianity and when they became Christians, they blamed the Jews because a Jew had betrayed Christ to the Romans, resulting in Christ being killed by crucifixion.

Dr Mahathir said that to force the Jews out of Europe, they seized the territory of the Arab Palestinians to create the state of Israel and since then, West Asia had never been at peace.

The attempts of the Palestinians to get back their territory was opposed by the Europeans who instead supported Israelis' seizure of more Palestinian land and the killing of Palestinians.

The Sept 11 2001 attack on America, which supported Israel, was made an excuse for the Anglo-Saxon Europeans to return to their old violent ways.

He said their strategy to fight terrorism was through attacking Muslim countries and Muslims, whether they were guilty or not.

"America and Britain did not care at all about the condemnation of the world against their actions. Opposition by their own people was ignored.

"They wanted to show the worlds how powerful they are and anyone challenging them would be attacked by their military forces," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that although he criticised the Europeans, he was not anti-European. In fact he was embarrassed to criticise the Europeans because his many European friends and acquaintances would feel hurt.

He said: "The European countries which are friendly towards us will feel hurt. Certainly their media will condemn me as a racist.

"But I consider that exposing who the Europeans are has become so important that the risk must be taken."

He said that failure by Malaysia to know the Europeans would make it difficult for the country to prepare and strategise its own safety.

They had different views on issues like social issues, religion, culture and trade, he said, citing as example their rejection of the institutions of marriage and family and acceptance of the practice of free sex, including sodomy, as a right.

"The injunction against change of religion among Muslims, laws which differ from their laws will be questioned by them. Their media will be used to denigrate all that we practise."

"The cultures and values which they will force us to accept will be hedonism, unlimited quest for pleasure, the satisfaction of base desires, particularly sexual desires.

"Our way of life must be the same as their way of life. Asian values do not exist for them," he said.

He also said that globalisation was introduced by the western countries to facilitate their control of the world economy but the emergence of China as a big economic power with powerful military competency had made them uncomfortable.

"With this, the international climate has become very tense and challenging for everyone, including Malaysia. And the Europeans have demonstrated a desire to return to their fierce old ways," he said.

-- BERNAMA

MAM JH RON JK