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Parliament-motion (PM)

M'SIA IN GOOD HANDS UNDER PAK LAH'S LEADERSHIP

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is in good hands under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who comes from an influential family of Islamic scholars and politicians, said Backbenchers Club (BBC) Chairman Datuk Ir Mohd Zin Mohamed.

"As the leader of a government that dare to declare Malaysia an Islamic state, and in no uncertain terms about it, the new leadership, I am sure, knows which direction he wants the country to head to," he said when tabling a motion of confidence in Abdullah's leadership in the Dewan Rakyat here today.

He said that if others were proud because they hailed from a family of national leaders, renowned politicians, businessmen and educationists, Abdullah was no less distinguished, having come from an influential family of Islamic scholars and politicians in Penang.

"Ahmad Badawi, his father, was the first mufti of Penang while Abdullah Fahim, his grandfather, was a well-known Islamic scholar and one of the founders of Umno, who determined Aug 31, 1957 as the date for the country's independence," he said.

Mohd Zin said it was the hopes and aspirations of the people that to see that continuous emphasis be given to promote the noble values of Islam, in addition to safeguard the interest of the non-Muslims, women and senior citizens.

"In this context, I am sure it will be difficult for anyone to question his capability because of his fine qualities including trustworthy.

"Given such qualities, the Barisan Nasional (BN) did not err when it chose Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Seri Abdullah as the Prime Minister," he said.

He said Abdullah's appointment was not made in haste as some quarters would like to believe but done after a long period of assessment.

"Furthermore, the Prime Minister was a member of the first cabinet of former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed," he said.

Mohd Zin said that a tested and proven leader, Abdullah was certainly capable of carrying out his responsibilities.

On the personality of the new Prime Minister, he said Abdullah was soft-spoken but therein lay his strength.

"He invents nothing or purposely projects himself through controversy. He's not the type to sponsor protest, lobby for something or test his influence.

"All the while when he was No.2, he proved that being subservient was more important. He sought not glamour and popularity like the No.2 before him," he said.

He said Abdullah was a moderate leader but therein lay his influence.

Debating the motion, former Finance Minister Tan Sri Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said he believed that under Abdullah's leadership, Malaysia would achieve greater progress and capable of competing with other countries.

Likening the present Malaysia to a mosquito capable of threatening an elephant, he said that in years to come Malaysia would be more than just a mosquito.

"I am sure that under the new administration, we will not be a mosquito forever," he said.

Tengku Razaleigh also prayed that the new Prime Minister and his administration would receive divine guidance in overcoming whatever

problems encountered in building Malaysia into a developed and prosperous nation.

He said he believed that Malaysia would continue to be the best place to live in because the strong foundation left in place by past leaders.

Tengku Razaleigh also hoped that the new administration could focus on achieving the objective of the New Economic Policy (NEP) to provide 30 per cent ownership of corporate wealth to the Bumiputeras.

"Now we talk about 2010 as the new target date. So, we have only seven years to redeem 13 years of failure," he said, adding that the 30 per cent target was supposed to have been achieved in 1990.

Tengku Razaleigh hoped that no new date would be fixed after 2010.

Kerk Kim Hock (DAP-Kota Melaka) in his speech said Abdullah undeniably had all the qualifications to become the Prime Minister.

"His image of being a 'Mr Clean' and 'Mr Nice' further strengthens the people's confidence in him. But, many challenges and responsibilities await him," he said.

He said the DAP was willing to work together with Abdullah in overcoming the challenges as "we all have being elected to make Malaysia a better place for all Malaysians."

Datuk Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili (BN-Bandau) meanwhile expressed confidence that Abdullah would achieve something historic for the country during his tenure as Prime Minister.

"He has a strong background before venturing into politics, has vast experience in politics and has made many contributions to the country.

"All these are suitable to steer Malaysia into the 21st century," he said.

He also expressed confidence that the new administration would not sideline Sabah and Sarawak.

"I am confident that the Prime Minister will guarantee development for Sabah and Sarawak," he said.

Meanwhile, Datuk Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar (BN-Batang Lupar) talked of complex challenges facing the new Prime Minister in particular in uniting the Malays.

But, he had confidence in Abdullah's leadership to overcome the challenges and bring the people into an era of greater excellence.

Mohd Zin in winding up the debate said Abdullah had never shown hatred or negative reactions even when others said bad things about his family.

"He was ever smiling," he said.

The motion was later approved by the House. The Dewan Rakyat will sit again tomorrow.

-- BERNAMA

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