

23 MAY 2003

Mahathir-Candidate

REJECT SELFISH LEADERS, DR M TELLS UMNO MEMBERS

JITRA, May 23 (Bernama) -- Elected representatives who only work hard before being elected and neglect their responsibilities after winning will not be selected again in the coming general election, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said such elected representatives were selfish and self-centred and adopted the "What I Get" attitude.

They were prepared to set aside the party's struggles to the extent of the party becoming weak and hated by the people, said Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno President.

He said one of the examples of elected representatives not performing their responsibilities is not attending the Dewan Rakyat meetings.

"Previously, there was a proposal to telecast live the proceedings of the Dewan Rakyat in television, but many did not agree because if televised live, we will be showing only empty seats," he said when opening the Kubang Pasu Umno division delegates' meeting at Dewan Wawasan here.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the division chief, said some elected representatives attended the Dewan Rakyat meetings merely to record their attendance so that they could claim their allowance.

He said the people would not support their elected representatives who did not attend Dewan Rakyat sessions because they were disappointed and fed up with their attitude.

"Such elected representatives, with the approach of the election season, will show up again... to do some work... to win over the hearts of the voters," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was surprised by the attitude of these elected representatives because before they were elected, they were prepared to work hard so that they would be chosen as a candidate but after winning in the election, they did not discharge their responsibilities.

He said because of the attitude of these elected representatives, voters' support for the Barisan Nasional (BN) had been jeopardised.

He said these wakil rakyat were selfish and adopted the attitude of "What I Can Get" and this attitude was the cause of Umno to be weak and the existence of splinter groups in the party.

"This is how PAS came about. It was previously known as Pan Malayan Islamic Party (PIMP). They were disappointed for not getting positions and posts, they set up a splinter party which was followed by several other groups which were all from Umno," he said.

Dr Mahathir urged Umno members to revive the original spirit of Umno's struggles in the interest of Islam, the Malay race and country without being too selfish or split into groups.

"We must revive the original Umno spirit and take good care of the party. Umno members should not scramble to become leaders because this will make the people fed up and support opposition parties," he said.

Dr Mahathir warned members that "our struggles will come to an end" if the majority of Umno members adopted such an attitude.

He said actually the party's struggles had not been accomplished because the country was facing a more challenging time now compared to the pre and post independence eras.

Dr Mahathir said what happened to Iraq showed that the western powers, which had a history of colonialism and seizing the wealth of others, were now trying to revive the colonialists policy.

"They tried to emerge as colonial powers by forming puppet governments to adore them in countries which they hated," he said.

He said signs of the western powers' intention to colonise could be seen when they said Southeast Asia was dangerous and there was terrorism.

This could be made an excuse to attack Malaysia, he said.

"We know that this country is not happy with Malaysia and tried to end our independence discreetly. Don't think this thing (attack) will not happen," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who spoke for the last time at the delegates meeting, also thanked the voters in Kubang Pasu for their support each time a general election was held since 1974.

The Prime Minister said although he was not from Kubang Pasu, Umno members in the division had steadfastly supported him as he had not lost in the election.

He urged Umno members to emulate the division which accepted the leadership's decision in picking the candidate to represent them whenever an election was held.

"We do not want to have problems when candidates are changed. I urge all Umno members to give full support even though the candidate is from Sabah or Sarawak," he added.

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