

'Democracy can lead to wrong choice of leaders'

Malaysiakini.com

February 17, 2011

Democracy is imperfect as the power choose is with the majority but sometimes they do not make well informed choices, declared former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking at a Senate organised forum today, Mahathir said in the future it is possible for the opposition to run the federal government if the people so wish.

"Ninety-nine point nine percent of people of one race in some country's are forced to demonstrate and protest to overthrow their leader who was democratically voted in by 99.99 percent of the public.

"The power is given to the public to choose their leaders. In Malaysia it is possible (for the opposition to take over) but in other countries it is impossible.

Democracy is not a perfect system because we give the right to decide to the people but they are not wise in choosing (their leader)," said Mahathir (right).

The former prime minister, who held his post for 22 years before stepping down in 2003, joked that the ideology of democracy is even "frustrating" to intellectuals.

Critical defect in some democracies

Another defect in the system, he said, was the constitutional requirement in some countries, where top leaders are only allowed to hold office for two terms.

"By the time any plan is implemented there are demonstrations and the government is uprooted again.

"I have to refer to my own experience - the first year we are learning how to run the country. In the second year we think about the plans. In the third year only we plan.

"By the time it's the fourth year the election is coming and we have to concentrate (on the election)," he said, drawing laughter from the audience. .

Referring to the United States system, Mahathir said when the president loses and becomes a 'lame duck "because there isn't time to see his plans through.

He then Dr commended his successors, specifically Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, for keeping to his plan instead of scrapping it.

"A new prime minister might have his own plans and wants to show off his own schemes. Vision 2020 has been there for 30 years, for a good 20 years I was there to see it through but Najib is also continuing the efforts but maybe tweaked a little," he said.

"At least the main obstacle - the ego of a leader did not get into the way of Vision 2020," he added.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/156311>