

PM: We want the best for all

THE following is Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's response to the call by the Gerakan to the Economic Planning Unit to disclose the methodology used to show that the bumiputra share in the country's economic pie is only 18.9%.

The Prime Minister made the statement when asked by reporters upon his return from performing the *umrah*.

Q: It is as if people are taking advantage of your openness, and they are challenging Malay rights. It is as if the non-Malays are disputing the rights of Malays when the Malays are not questioning non-Malay rights. What will you do to ensure that people do not go overboard in questioning or disputing?

A: If people question, then we must have answers. We do not

have a problem. If we are transparent, what is the problem? We are not liars.

The actions we take are based on facts which strengthen the stand we have taken. Why do we have to take those steps?

If the plans we are taking are related to us helping the bumiputras, it must still be continued because the balance has still not reached the level we deem as acceptable. Then, that is when actions have to be taken.

Now, it is not the implementation of the New Economic Policy because that policy was concluded in 1991.

But the policies after that have to continue with several aspects contained in the NEP, such as poverty eradication.

Because if we say it is 1991 and the NEP is done, do we say everything stops? We no longer

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eradicate poverty because that was the old policy? That would be a wrong stand. It is not right.

There are approaches which were started when the NEP was implemented, which have not achieved their goals, and so have to be continued.

There are two important NEP strategies, *penyusunan semula masyarakat* (the restructuring of society) and poverty eradication, and debates have been made in so many numbers and in a great deal of meetings, such

as the National Economic Consultative Council 1, 2 and 3.

Tak habis habis (Till no end) we talk about this. People say the new generation is more visible. Young people, after studying, have idealism and will question a lot of things.

But what is important to us is that we give answers. We don't want to shut their mouths as things will continue to burn in their hearts, and this will lead to dissatisfaction.

To open up on important

things is not something that troubles us. It won't trouble us.

The young people who question are also Malays, it's not like all Malays are just silent on issues.

We are ready to give opinions and, we hope they will not go overboard, make all sorts of accusations.

We are not in the business of cheating people. That is not our way. We don't lead by lying (*memerintah menipu*). We lead and want the best for all Malaysians, not just one particular party.

We have to see the whole situation, not just one quarter or corner. That is important. The Malaysian Government now is built based on unity. Cooperation is possible because the Government shares power.

The peoples' confidence is in a government of all races. A Cabinet decision is a decision agreed by all. How can we not have others' agreement?

We do not think like that. Problems of the Indian community, we take on as a responsible government to Malaysians of different races and religions. That is what the people need to understand. Don't try and accuse, accuse, accuse, and the media tries to *mengembur tak pasal-pasal* (play up with no reason) issues which are sensitive.

Q: The Gerakan president wants the Government to disclose how it came up with the figures.

A: Oh, so he is questioning methodology. We have no problem explaining any methodologies we have used.

You must understand when there is a crisis. The economic crisis, for example, was bad. So many businesses, Malay entrepreneurs, were finished. How many had huge debts which they could not pay?

So that had affected our standing. I wish that our standing could be up at all times, but it is not like that when there is a problem.

Our policies are long-term policies. In that time, there are many things that happen. The

high price of oil also has an effect on our plans, for example. So we face it all and have to overcome the challenges. We don't want to make accusations, insinuations.

This is a general statement for anyone. There is no benefit to insinuate or accuse. If you want explanations, then ask properly. Why ask and then insinuate, ask and then accuse?

Q: So you think some parties, groups are taking advantage of the openness now?

A: I don't know. Human beings always take advantage at any time. When there is a chance (to take advantage) he will take it.

If I make it open, they will take advantage and challenge (the decision). If there is no openness then they will ask why is it like this, why today there is no freedom, why no openness. That is taking advantage.

When we open, there are those who *nak kacau* (will cause trouble) and take advantage.

But we must face this seriously. What is important is that if there is something constructive (suggested), that we should improve (on the decision), we are prepared to receive their views. But if the intention is to cause trouble, then let's see what will happen.

Q: This is a warning to the groups?

A: To anyone. Don't twist (the matter). Malays or others, don't *kacau* (cause trouble). If you want to ask, ask properly. Don't *buat kacau* (cause trouble). Our country is peaceful.

God does not make problems by causing typhoons, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, but human beings want to make problems, for what? We are very peaceful. If there is a problem, discuss it properly. That is important.

There is no patience now for problems, and there are those who want to find problems. Instigate, insinuate, want to make innuendos. There are no benefits to such actions.