

**Rectifying People's Perception Huge Challenge For Umno, BN - Muhyiddin
Bernama
November 21, 2011**

BANGI, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today Umno and the Barisan Nasional face a huge challenge of rectifying the people's perception of the two entities.

Saying that he agreed with the opinion of former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad that much remains to be done to garner the people's support, Muhyiddin said the challenge was not simple.

"Things have changed from the past, from the time of Tun (Dr Mahathir). It was easy to garner the people's support then because they understood and appreciated history.

"The present generation does not carry the baggage of the past. They were born after Merdeka (independence), in an era of development. As such, they are not tied to the baggage of the past," he told reporters after presenting the "Ilham Desa" national awards, here.

Dr Mahathir had said in an interview with a newspaper that Umno faced many internal disputes that it currently lacked good, credible leaders.

The younger generation have undergone a mindset change and their view of the future is different, and this calls for a different approach to manage the change, he said.

"Today, with the easy availability of knowledge, technology and information, we have to manage the situation with prudence.

"Umno and BN leaders are aware of this but the question is how to manage this. We are trying our best to manage the situation. But I agree with Tun (Dr Mahathir) that much remains to be done," he said.

Muhyiddin said it was not very correct to say that Umno and the BN had not done anything to strengthen the party and government after the general election of 2008.

The transformation programme implemented by the government helmed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has shown that the party's policies have been well received by the people, he said.

"Believe me, we are beginning to see the results, for example a rise in the support of the Malays, Indians and Chinese for what we have been doing in the past two years.

"The situation is better, though I agree with Tun (Dr Mahathir) that it is not good enough, that we are not strong enough in terms of handling party affairs and internal problems and nurturing second echelon leaders at all levels to continue with our struggle," he said.

However, he said, these matters had the attention of the party leadership which goes down to the ground to have meetings at the divisional level and with the people.

Asked about talk that there was lobbying among party members to be candidates in the next general election, Muhyiddin said there was no necessity to lobby as the party leadership would make the evaluation and pick what the prime minister had said were winnable candidates.

"We know who is suitable, who is qualified, who can garner support and achieve victory. That is the consideration that will be used," he said.

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