

## **'We need to revive Malaysia, make it respectable again' - Dr M**

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PUTRAJAYA, May 21 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the task of the new administration would be to revive the country and make it respected again throughout the world.

He said it was a challenge to bring back good governance and successful development so that the country was once again recognised as a self-sustaining nation.

"We must be aware that our country is not accorded the respect it once enjoyed. I am very disappointed (now) because at one time we were known as the best administration among the Commonwealth countries as we carried out tasks well and implemented successful programmes and plans.

"But, today, we find that this country is no longer respected, and the administrators are no longer held in high regard," he said when addressing staff of the Prime Minister's Department at Dataran Putra here.

Dr Mahathir also reminded the staff on the separation of powers in a democratic system, namely the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, as a form of 'check and balance' to restore the country's honour.

"This separation (of powers) is very important. If there is no check and balance like this, it will lead to undesirable consequences which cannot be reprimanded, prevented or objected to. This is what we have to remember. Administrators are the people with the will to carry out tasks to develop the country," he said.

"Administrators must serve with excellence and not be distracted by other reasons. This is very important, and I am convinced that you (the administrative staff) all know that we as administrators must adhere to our country's system of democracy," he said.

The Prime Minister said that if the separation of powers did not exist, one branch would end up dominating the other two and would resort to doing things contrary to the laws.

He said the staff of the administration played an important role as people who have pledged to serve the country without fear or favour.

"For example, if administrators are told to do something contrary to the laws of the country, then it is their responsibility not to accept such instructions. We have seen, in the last few years, that administrators had no power to reprimand or oppose instructions which went against the law," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it had been learned that many administrative staff, due to fear or gratification, had indulged in undesirable actions which could hurt the country.

"We found huge irregularities in the financial management of the country, so much so that now we are saddled with the problem of settling debts that have risen to a trillion ringgit. This (amount of debt) had never been incurred by us. In the past, we had no more than RM300 billion in debt, but now it has increased to over RM1 trillion.

"How do we settle this debt? We will have to rely on our efforts and intellect to overcome this challenge. For this, we need cooperation among the government, elected representatives and the administration," he said.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that Malaysia would be able to handle the various challenges by adhering to the principles of a democratic system of administration.

"Only in that way can we clean the administration of our country and, when it is clean, recognised, progressive and efficient, then our nation will have been revived. I hope all of you will give your undivided cooperation to me, as your prime minister, so long as what I do is not contrary to the national policies and laws," he said.

He said the administrators had to respect the constitution, which was created not to solely empower the government but to protect the people from any possible crime the government might commit.

"This is what we desire. We believe that with the cooperation of the administrators, we will

achieve our goals. I hope that with the change of government, we can solve many of the problems, especially the financial issues, the country faces.

"For this, we need competent, efficient and trustworthy administrators. This is my only hope," he said, and thanked the audience for the opportunity to explain the stand of the newly-elected government.

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