

Mahathir says will honour PH agreement on succession

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BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Sept 2 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he will honour the agreement by Pakatan Harapan (PH) partners that he will be interim prime minister, with the time frame mentioned as two years, before he hands over the reins to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

“I am confident that he (Anwar) is now more mature and much experienced,” he said.

He said this at a gathering with Malaysians residing in Brunei at a hotel here tonight.

He was replying to a question from one of the guests who had voiced worry about history repeating itself on the choice of the successor.

PH is made up of Bersatu, DAP, PKR and Amanah. Dr Mahathir is Bersatu chairman while Anwar is president elect of PKR.

To another question, Dr Mahathir said much was done to replace the previous prime minister like holding demonstrations, attempting to move a no-confidence motion (in Parliament), lodging police reports and in fact coming up with a People’s Declaration rejecting the leadership of the (previous) government but all to no avail until the people made their stand known through the ballot box.

On the same note, the prime minister said they could do likewise if they were dissatisfied with his successor (through the ballot box).

He also dismissed accusations that he is an “Ultra Malay” saying it was no different from other labels hurled against him like Mahafiraun, Mahazalim and the like, which he said were political fodder his opponents were fond of.

"For me the country comes first, so that there no wide gap between the races. Even if a country is not multiracial, if there is wide disparities among the people, it will invite disaster," he said.

According him, if the gap was very significant, especially along racial lines, it would lead to animosity and widespread rioting.

As such, he said efforts must be made to prevent this and that this was what the Pakatan Harapan government was doing, that is to unite the people and discard racial issues.

He added that whether one likes it or not, one cannot run away from racial issues in a multiracial country but with efforts to foster unity, it would check racial tension or enmity.

Meanwhile, referring to the Pan Borneo Highway project, Dr Mahathir said the government would continue to implement the project but it may take a longer time to complete as there were other financial commitments which have to be addressed first.

He said apart from development projects, the government machinery also needed to be 'repaired' as the country's administration was damaged during the previous rule and asked the people to be patient to see the new developments.

Asked what are his hopes after stepping down, Dr Mahathri said he would like to see Malaysia as a pride of all people as in the past and return Malaysia to its glory when the country was called an Asian Tiger, and wanted the government to be more democratic and not kleptocratic.

He said he wished to see there is rule of law to protect the people and Malaysia as a developed nation as envisaged under Vision 2020 even though it may not be realised according to the target date.

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