

## **Damaged government machinery can be restored, says Mahathir**

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PORT DICKSON, Oct 8 (Bernama) – Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight expressed confidence that the government machinery damaged by the previous government can be restored soon to a state better than before.

He said the government cannot function well if its machinery is not restored immediately.

“It was only after our (electoral) victory did we come to know how bad the administration of (former prime minister) Datuk Seri Najib (Tun Razak) was,” he said, adding that not only money was stolen, but all (government) officers had been brainwashed into helping Najib.

“When we took over, our task was to restore the government machinery. The government cannot function unless the previous machinery strongly serves the nation (now).

“However, when we realised that many of them in the machinery had been damaged by Datuk Seri Najib, we were forced to substitute them,” he said in his address at the ‘Mahathir-Anwar Gandingan Mantap Harapan Malaysia’ mega talk at the PD Waterfront here in campaigning for Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the Pakatan Harapan (PH) candidate for the Port Dickson parliamentary by-election.

Also present were Anwar, PKR president and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail; DAP secretary-general and Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng; Amanah president and Defence Minister Mohamad Sabu; DAP organising secretary and Transport Minister Anthony Loke Siew Fook and several other senior PH leaders.

Dr Mahathir said the present government had to rebuild and reorganise itself to be able to implement all policies and actions for the benefit of the people.

"That's the problem with the government machinery. Restoration is most difficult. However, *Alhamdulillah* (Praise be to God), the incorruptible can understand the workings of the new government in a short time and I am confident the government machinery can be restored soon, perhaps to an even better state," he said.

The Prime Minister said the civil servants also understand that there is no place for the corrupt in the government and stern action will be taken against the culprits.

"As such, our government will be free of corruption that is burdensome to us," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the new government had done a lot, including reducing the national debt although it is still at the trillion ringgit mark.

"We have cleaned up the government and also politics. We do not hear the people lamenting over problems. Questions over religion, race, colour ... all have been set aside, and I am convinced by the presence of people of all races tonight.

"Racial politics has no place in a multiracial Malaysia. This does not mean that we disregard racial problems. We realise that the Indians, for example, are left behind and we will help them.

"We also realise that the Malays have yet to achieve the best possible economic standard, maybe because they are not keen on taking on the major opportunities but settle for the easy way," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the government also strives to reduce the gap between the poor and the rich, which he said can lead to catastrophe unless dealt with.

"We are working on this. The allegations by some quarters that the Pakatan Harapan government is neglecting the Malays is not true," he said.

Dr Mahathir arrived just after 10 pm and was greeted by Anwar and the other leaders as the estimated 9,000 people, who had gathered as early as 6 pm, broke into applause as they witnessed history in the making as Dr Mahathir and Anwar stood together on the same stage after 20 years.

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