



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press Release

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MPs must work for the empowerment and welfare of the people

Congratulations to Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed on his appointment as the Prime Minister of Malaysia. With his past long and varied experience in leading the country, he will be able to take Malaysia to greater heights and prepare the way for a smooth succession.

I thank God and congratulate the people of Malaysia for participating peacefully and responsibly in the democratic process to elect a new government and to accept the results of the election. We have set a good example for other countries to emulate, particularly those Muslim states that are still ruled by dictators and absolute monarchs. We should be proud of our achievement.

I thank the police and other government agencies for maintaining peace and order throughout the elections, when, sometimes, emotions were running high among the supporters of the candidates.

The transition of power from the former government to the present one was smooth except for one hitch, the unnecessary delay in the swearing in of the Prime Minister. The results were confirmed by the election authorities by 5 a.m. on Thursday but the swearing in ceremony had to wait over 16 hours, until 9.30 p.m. last night, after repeated postponements.

Tun Mahathir was made to wait from 5p.m. until past 9.30 p.m. at the Istana before the ceremony started. It must be remembered that Tun is the elected leader of the Malaysian people and he must be given due respect. The delay gave rise to unwanted fears, tension, speculation and adverse international publicity.

Our Constitution is crystal clear on the appointment of the Prime Minister by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. He shall appoint a member of the House of Representatives who in his judgment is likely to command the confidence of the majority of the House. In exercising his judgment he can rely on the reports by relevant government officials.

In the instant case, there was no challenge to the request by Tun Mahathir to be appointed as the Prime Minister, and his support from the majority of parliamentarians could have been easily verified within a short time. There is no requirement for parties in a coalition to agree on the appointment or, as happened in Selangor some years ago, to submit a list of candidates for the Ruler to choose the Menteri Besar. Appointment of the Prime Minister must be done expeditiously in order to ensure continuity of government.

I call on the present government not to be obsessed with economic growth but to seriously address the issues of poverty and growing disparity in our society, and the destruction of our environment to satisfy the greed for profits. It must put an end to crony capitalism and wage a war on corruption, particularly corruption among politicians and senior government officials. As the Arabic saying goes "A fish rots from the head down."

I appeal to all elected representatives, both from the Government and the Opposition, to jointly work for the empowerment and welfare of the people, and to set aside their personal and party interests.

S.M. MOHAMED IDRIS

President

Consumers Association of Penang