

PM warns those who stir up sentiments

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IPOH, Mon. — The Government will not hesitate to take action against those involved in "certain issues" if they persist in stirring racial sentiments.

The warning came from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Don't push us too far. We may be moderate but there are also limits to our tolerance of those who set up demonstrations and boycotts along racial lines," he told a luncheon hosted by the Kinta Umno division here.

Among those who attended the luncheon were members of the Kinta Umno division, other divisional heads and representatives of the component parties of the Barisan Nasional. Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Bamli Ngah Talib and State Executive Councilors were also present.

The Prime Minister said there are people who

had forgotten the incident of May 13, 1969. There are people who stir up racial issues because "we have been moderate."

Firm action

He said there were people who want to test the tolerance of the Government and Umno. "If you go beyond limits we will take action and many people will feel the bitterness of it."

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said that if there were groups which acted in such directions, Umno would not remain quiet.

"We don't want to see another May 1969 but if there are demonstrations and so on we will take action that will be effective."

He said when he took over the reins of the Government, hundreds of political detainees were released as the Government was prepared to 'take the risk'.

"I warn those who have

plans for demonstrations and boycotts that if they are implemented, the firmness of our counter-action will be felt."

Dr Mahathir said the Government was bent on seeing that there was peace in the country and that all lived in harmony. "We want to be a model of democracy. There is no country in South-East Asia where there is more democracy than in Malaysia. There is no country with the type of tolerance that we have."

"We want to show others that the different races can live together in peace and that there is religious tolerance."

"But however moderate we may be there are limits and no one should go beyond such limits."

Throughout his hour-long address, the Prime Minister repeatedly stressed that Umno was a moderate party and that its members and Malays were moderate people.

He said the Barisan Nasional was developed from the Alliance which had three parties, the Umno, the MCA and the MIC, representing the three major races in the country.

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The Alliance was formed to fight for independence and it gained the support from all people throughout the country.

He said the Alliance and the Barisan Nasional had ruled the country for some 28 years and had brought peace, prosperity and a lot of development which had benefited all races, including those in Sabah and Sarawak.

"We cannot say the Malays have not progressed. The Chinese too have progressed and the Indians are no more longer regarded as rubber tappers only."

Dr Mahathir said it was part of human nature that people were not fully satisfied with an-

anything they received but they should only be moderate in asking for more.

He said there were some groups which had deviated from Islam. There were some who want two imams in the same area and who say that people must go through their marriages twice because the first one was not approved by Islam.

"We have never heard of such things before. How can one mosque have two imams?"

His remark that Umno must oppose these people to the last was greeted with loud applause.

Referring to Pas, he said by the grace of God they were allowed to rule Kelantan for 18 years previously but they did

not bring any improvement and much land was sold to people from Singapore.

Dr Mahathir said Umno did not want power for itself only. There were enough Umno Parliament representatives to run the country but it preferred to share power with the other component parties of the Barisan Nasional.

"We even did not reject Pas. When they were in the Barisan Nasional, two of them were made Ministers. We are always ready to co-operate and work with others."

Dr Nawawi Nat Awin who is the chairman of the Kinta Umno division said his division was honoured by the first-ever visit by a Prime Minister and president of Umno.

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