

# We'll remain friendly with Sabah Govt, says PM

322 AUG 1985

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Federal Government would keep an eye on events in Sabah while still maintaining a friendly relationship with the Government led by Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

He said in an interview with the magazine *Arabia - The Islamic World Review* that although the Government accepted the Sabahans' decision to vote in the PBS, "the Barisan Nasional still feels the concept of multi-racial government would be better for Sabah."

"Therefore, we will watch the turn of events there," he said.

He told the British-based magazine that there were multiple reasons such as personalities, policies, attitudes and performance

which could cause a party to lose an election.

"All are added up when people are making their choice.

"In our system, it is possible for a party supported by a minority of voters to get an absolute majority in terms of seats.

"We know this and we accept it. It is better than proportional representation under which no single party would be able to have sufficient seats to form a government," he added.

On Islamic values, Dr Mahathir told the magazine that the Government wanted to inculcate the high sense of morality as taught by Islam.

He said the Government wanted to build a community which practises brotherhood among Muslims, tolerance towards non-Muslims

who did no harm to Muslims, honesty in all their dealings, lack of avarice, discipline, cleanliness, honour, harmony, respect for the elders and so on.

"There is so much lip-service among Muslims where these values are concerned.

"Thus, Muslims are murdered in the name of brotherhood, promises made without intention of keeping them, arrogance displayed even when possessing only a little power," he added.

Dr Mahathir said non-Muslims did not fear true Islam, particularly with regard to the values concerned.

He said the problem was to try to get the Muslims to practice these values and gain greater respect and acceptance from the non-Muslims.

"This we try to do by example," he added.

Dr Mahathir said if these values were practised, the Muslims, not only in Malaysia but everywhere else, would become stronger and they would no longer leave their countries to seek refuge in non-Muslim countries.

Dr Mahathir said he was satisfied with the country's Islamic foreign policy but felt Muslim unity or even co-operation between Muslim countries was still very much a dream.

"Our policy alone will not yield results," he said.

However, he added the Government was sufficiently encouraged to continue with giving priority in its foreign policy with regards to Islamic countries.