

PM'S TOUR OF SARAWAK

Dr M happy with Taib's administration

KUCHING, Sat. 25 AUG 1985

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he was "more than satisfied" with the administration of Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud.

He also warned that attempts to "divide and rule" would have serious consequences on the people.

"It is very wrong to do anything to weaken the Government because the price that will be paid will be not by Datuk Patinggi Taib but the people of Sarawak, particularly the poor people," he said.

"This idea of divide and rule, of trying to make the Ibans, Malays and

Chinese fight each other is very bad."

On accusations by certain groups that Datuk Patinggi Taib was a weak Chief Minister, he said that he did not notice any weakness and that everything was going on as planned.

However, he said if people were deceived by propaganda which did not bring any benefit to the rakyat then any Government, including the Barisan Nasional, would become weak.

"We will only become weak if the rakyat is gullible enough to believe in the propaganda of people with self-interests," he added.

He was speaking at a Press conference at the Kuching international airport after his four-day

tour of Sarawak before returning to Kuala Lumpur.

He said the progress in Sarawak was "tremendous" despite the high cost of development.

Spirit

While progress in Sarawak was rapid, Dr Mahathir said that he was concerned with the high cost of bringing development to the State and therefore had looked into providing cheaper electricity which is one of the basic amenities for the development of Sarawak.

Dr Mahathir said that he was particularly impressed with the co-operation among the various communities in Sarawak, a major factor in speeding up development.

He hoped that this spirit of give and take would prevail and that the rakyat would reject any group which tried to divide the communities by instigating feelings of hate and jealousy among the various races.

"We must not allow such tactics to hinder the process of development in Sarawak," he said.

Dr Mahathir was also pleased with the development of tourism in the State.

He said that it was essential for the youth to understand the concept of co-operation between the various communities so that the future generation would not forget the efforts and struggles of those who had fought for independence.