

Dr M: Do not undermine racial harmony 'Don't go too far' warning

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KOTA KINABALU, Mon. — The Prime Minister today warned those involved in the campaign to deny the Barisan Nasional a two-thirds majority in the coming general election not to go to the extent of undermining racial harmony.

He also cautioned others who have been too critical of the New Economic Policy (NEP) against going "too far". He said their actions might arouse the racial feelings of the communities.

"We must always value the racial harmony that has been achieved and realise that anything done to undermine the situation will only be bad for the nation," said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking at the opening of the new Kota

By **ZAINON AHMAD** and
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Kinabalu airport terminal building, he said he was aware that those involved in the campaign to deny the Barisan Nasional its two-thirds majority had organised talks and distributed pamphlets attacking the Government and its leaders.

It was unfortunate that many of the criticisms were racial in nature.

Some of the critics had even compared the Government with the Filipino regime that was recently deposed.

No way

"No one can deny that there has been a lot of progress and much development since the country achieved independence," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional needed to retain its two-thirds majority for the country to be stable.

Dr Mahathir also hit out at those who have been criticising the Government's ac-

tion in allowing some of its mismanaged companies to continue in operation.

He said it was easy for these people to speak at seminars and forums and criticise when they were not responsible for the 200,000 people employed by these companies.

"These people have no way of knowing that the Government has always been monitoring the situation, closing some companies and revamping others," he said.

"We are doing that in a manner that the workers do not suffer and also in a manner that does not cause other problems."

The Prime Minister said Government agencies and companies were set up to help the Bumiputeras. He realised that the cost had been high.

"But without these companies, it is almost impossible for the Bumiputeras to have achieved the present 21 per cent in equity participation," he said.

The Prime Minister, accompanied by Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, is on his first official visit to Sabah since the PBS succeeded Berjaya as the Government of the State.

★ TURN TO P2, COL 10

Pairin on the visit by PM to Sabah

FROM PAGE ONE

He said Sabah was stable after it gained control of more than two-thirds of the seats in the State Assembly. It was no longer challenged like it was last year after winning only a simple majority.

Earlier, Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan said the Prime Minister's visit was significant to the Government and people of Sabah.

He said: "His presence here symbolises the closer understanding that has been achieved between the Federal Government and federal leaders with the State Government and State leaders in recent weeks.

"I regard this as very important in view of the past misunderstandings."

Earlier, Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah were given a red carpet welcome at the airport on their arrival for the two-day visit.

Among those who welcomed them were Datuk Pairin, Sabah Cabinet Ministers, Usno acting president Datuk Haji Sakaran Dandai, community leaders, senior Government servants and prominent businessmen.

A four-member unicorn troupe from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and a Murut "taggungak" cultural group were also present.

The Prime Minister is scheduled to attend a meeting of State Barisan Nasional component parties here tomorrow. The meeting will be chaired by Datuk Pairin in his capacity as chairman of the Sabah BN consultative council.

No agenda has been fixed for the meeting, which is expected to be a "fellowship" session. Three representatives each from PBS, Usno and Berjaya will attend the meeting.