

Dr M: Don't go beyond boundaries

By LIM HOCK CHYE

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad advised certain component parties in the Barisan Nasional not to go beyond the boundaries of democracy being practised in the country or against the majority rule.

Opening the MIC's 34th general assembly in Shah Alam last night, he said any attempt by a component party to form a minority Government will lead to chaos that will turn a democratic country into an autocratic country.

"If Barisan Nasional falls, so will democracy in the country. If we believe in the voice of the majority, we should observe its ruling," he said.

"The interest of the minority will not be ignored in a democracy like ours. However, the democracy being practised in

this country does not mean that the minority can use it as a means to achieve gains which will affect the majority's interest.

"I have to explain democracy in detail as the progress or slowdown of a country depends on how we perceive the power of democracy and its weaknesses.

"There are certain channels for leaders of component parties to voice their dissatisfaction against any policy or the implementation of any policy. In fact, for major component parties the Cabinet is the channel.

"Through this channel, the explanation can be given without hurting the feeling of any party or its members or other smaller BN component parties. If one were to observe this,

BN solidarity will be further strengthened."

The Prime Minister also hit out at certain quarters who are using democracy to champion their interests. These quarters, he said, cash in on sentiments and hope that the Government will act against them.

"However, when we do so, they will in turn say that we are being undemocratic. In fact, they are trying to destroy the very essence of democracy in our country. We must remember that we practise marriage of convenience for the sake of the people."

On the MIC, the Prime Minister said two months ago, it won the seventh general election with a majority it can be proud of. The party won all six seats in the Dewan Rakyat which were allocated to it and

lost only one of the 13 State Assembly seats given to it to contest.

"After the general election, our task is to serve the people and the country. We should not rest on our laurels. I am confident that all MPs or State Assemblymen are ready to serve the people.

"However, in my view, the BN's resounding victory has in a way made us slack in one or two areas. One of them is that a few MPs or State Assemblymen did not try to understand rules about their respective Assemblies' meetings or standing orders, issues and implications of a Bill to be tabled."

Dr Mahathir said, perhaps, some of them did not fully un-

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derstand the Government's policies as outlined. The lack of this understanding, he stressed, will result in a rift among component parties.

Hence, it is important to understand Government policies and their rationale, objectives and programmes to ensure that these are implemented successfully.

He said all MIC members should be proud of the party's achievement.

Previously, the MIC came under the criticisms of others as it had created a few unpleasant incidents in its quest for seats. However, the MIC has now become a leading example for other component parties to follow, he said.

He praised the MIC for voicing its views through the proper channel.