

Group out to exploit BMF report: Mahathir

By JOHN KAM

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IPOH, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad warned the people today against those who would make use of the BMF report to discredit Government leaders.

"We are not afraid of releasing the full report. We have not done anything wrong. Action will be taken against those who have committed criminal offences," he told a gathering of about 30,000 people at the Municipal Padang here.

Dr Mahathir, who is on a three-day visit to Perak, was interrupted many times during his address by shouts of "Hidup Mahathir" and "Hidup Malaysia".

He said now that the BMF scandal report had been released the people should guard against those who would make use of it to discredit Government leaders.

attached to the report without relating them to the full report and mislead the people.

There are those who want to condemn the Government because they are jealous of the success achieved by the country.

"They don't want to see progress being achieved. They create all sorts of problems. I am confident you will not listen to groups who are just out to destroy the nation."

Dr Mahathir said the country was facing difficult times because of the economic slowdown and business was not doing well and people had lost jobs.

However, the Government is looking into ways and means of helping the people out of the situation to create a better business environment and jobs for the people.

He said that Perak was hard hit because of the tin crisis. It was not the

The Opposition parties will make use of it for political ends. They will not be interested in how much money had gone — whether its \$100 million or \$1,000 million — but they will want to link Government leaders to the crime.

Condemnation

The Prime Minister said he was not happy with attempts by some people to involve Government leaders and others who had not done anything wrong in the BMF scandal.

These people are just interested in whose names appear in the report and they will misrepresent it to the public without proper explanation.

It is not right for these people to discredit those who have written letters

fault of the Government or the mine owners' that the world market for tin had dropped.

The Government is doing its best to ease the situation and more projects will be undertaken so that the people will have jobs.

He took to task those who had criticised the Government's huge expenditure in constructing the Penang Bridge.

The decision to build the bridge was taken as far back as the time when Tun Razak was Prime Minister when the country's economy was in good shape.

"But things don't get completed overnight. For a project of that size a lot of work had to be done."

The Government is also constructing a highway from Bukit Kayu Hitam in the north to Johore Baru. The highway project will create a lot of jobs for the people.

More projects will be undertaken to create new

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jobs while those who still cannot get jobs will be encouraged to go into business, including petty trading and hawking.

The Prime Minister said he was happy to see so many people of all races gathered at the padang — a sign of the people's solidarity.

He said the Government had ruled since independence. It had always placed the interest of the country above everything else.

There were people who said that the country would go to ruins after the 1969 troubles but "we

have been successful and (the country is) more developed than the pre-1969 era. They are jealous of our success".

There are groups outside the country who are jealous and want to discredit the country.

Within the country, groups in politics and outside politics also threaten the Government.

The Prime Minister and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah were given a tumultuous welcome when they arrived at the padang.

The crowd comprised members of Umno and

the other Barisan Nasional component parties, civil servants and voluntary organisations who had gathered there since 2pm. It was one of the biggest gatherings ever.

All roads leading to the padang, in the heart of town, were closed as busloads of supporters converged on the padang.

Shouts of "Hidup Mahathir" and "Hidup Malaysia" rang out every now and then.

The crowd sang the Umno song "Warisan" and the national song "Ke Medan Bakti" before the Prime Minister's arrival

and after he had finished his address.

The gathering also pledged its support for the Government under the leadership of Dr Mahathir to lead the country to greater progress and harmony.

The Prime Minister and party were given a red carpet welcome when they arrived at the Ipoh airport earlier. They were greeted by Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ramli Ngah Talib and his wife, Raja Datin Noora Ashikin binte Raja Abdullah.

Hundreds of people turned up at the airport to welcome the Prime Minister and his wife.

Among them were leaders of the component parties of the Barisan Nasional including Umno leaders, Gerakan national president Datuk Dr Lim Keng Yaik, People's Progressive Party national president Tee An Chuan and its vice-president, Mr Paramjit Singh, and MCA Perak State liaison committee chairman Chan Kit Chee.

Others were State Executive Councillors, MPs, Senators and heads of Government departments, including State Secretary Datuk Seri Mohamed Nurzid bin Mohamed Wali and State Financial Officer Syed Sidi Iddid.

Dr Mahathir and Datuk Seri Ramli Ngah took a Proton Saga to the Ipoh Municipal Padang.

They were preceded by 200 motor-cyclists from the Barisan Nasional component parties, followed by about 40 Proton Sagas.