

No plans for emergency rule in Sabah, says PM

By AHMAD A. TALIB

THE federal government has no intention to impose emergency rule in Sabah because the police are capable of handling the recent spate of bombings and demonstrations there, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The situation must be resolved through political means, he added.

The Prime Minister, who was given a closed-door briefing on the situation by Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan, said more police personnel have already been despatched to Kota Kinabalu to help maintain law and order.

Datuk Pairin, who arrived in the federal capital on Sunday to keep an

appointment he had requested of the Prime Minister, told newsmen after the meeting that he was satisfied with the hour-long meeting. Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS), the Chief Minister said, is also in favour of a political solution to the present problems.

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He said the dissolution of the State Assembly last Feb. 27 is one approach towards a political solution to the state problem.

Speaking calmly of what he described as the "trials and tribulations" of Sabah, Datuk Pairin

said: "I informed the Prime Minister that it is not true that the PBS is responsible for painting crosses on the walls of the state mosque. The allegation has been nothing more than malicious fabrications."

He again refuted allegations the PBS state

preparations.

Yesterday's meeting also discussed the PBS application to join the Barisan National, but no immediate answer was given. Datuk Pairin, however, is still hopeful that the request will be favourably considered, and that the party's entry is "just a matter of time."

He did not rule out the possibility that the present problems could have been averted, and the situation made stable, if the Barisan had agreed to the PBS request when it was first made. As it is, he hoped that "common sense" will prevail to prevent the tense situation from turning explosive and beyond control.

government is anti-Islam.

Dr Mahathir also confirmed his intention to visit Sabah next month, though the dates have yet to be fixed. The PBS, Datuk Pairin said, welcomes the confirmation "with relief" and it can now make appropriate