

BN Govt all for peace: Mahathir

By SHARIFAH ROZITA

~~MST 28 MAR 1986~~

KOTA BARU, Thurs. — The Barisan Nasional Government has always stood for peace and co-operation among the people, emphasising unity as a means of achieving them, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"As Prime Minister of the country, I want to see peace and that is why the Barisan Government has always stressed co-operation among the people, not only among Malays but also among the non-Malays," he said.

Addressing a mammoth rally, the Prime Minister said the progress that had been brought to the country was proof of the Government's sincerity in seeing to the needs of the people.

More than 40,000 people gathered in the Desa Darulnaim housing scheme near here to welcome Dr Mahathir on his two-day visit to Kelantan.

He took a potshot — albeit a milder one than in his other addresses — at Pas, which has its traditional stronghold in the State, saying: "It is not our way to call some among us *kafir* and tell lies about our fellow Muslims.

"Instead, we have always called for peace. However, there are 'other people' who are doing otherwise, calling us names and making enemies of us," he said.

"They tell lies about us and yet they insist that they are living according to the Quran and the *Hadith*. What is the use of doing that?"

Dr Mahathir pointed out that the opposition party had often chided Umno for co-operating with the non-Malays.

"And yet, they are doing the very same thing they condemned us for. They are now actively meeting with the other races and lobbying for support.

"It is clear then that their motive is purely political and they are merely out to get more votes.

"They are setting aside their principles for political gain," he told the crowd, which started streaming into the open space designated for the rally some two hours before he was due to arrive.

Dr Mahathir, who said he was happy with the huge attendance, warned the people to beware

★ TURN TO P2, COL 9

Priority in Fifth Plan for poor, rural areas

28 MAR 1986

★ FROM PAGE ONE

as the Opposition was not sincere in wanting to bring development to the people.

The Barisan Nasional Government, in the past 30 years, had instead been careful in distributing the wealth of the nation, pooling funds from the more developed States to help the backward ones.

It, and the Alliance before it, had endeavoured to provide the necessary infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, schools and hospitals to all in the country, he said.

Dr Mahathir, who was welcomed in full Kelantanese tradition, with the pounding of *rebana* and a procession of *sireh junjung* carriers, expressed his satisfaction with the housing project which was originally intended to serve the needs of the Universiti Sains medical school.

Many would benefit from the construction of houses and other projects and this was needed particularly in view of the current economic slowdown and unemployment.

The Prime Minister said that although the present economic situation meant the Government had had to cut down on its plans in the Fifth Malaysia Plan, priority would still be given to the poor and rural areas.

He assured the people that despite the reduction in the number of development projects under the Plan, the people would still benefit.

"We should not be deterred. Instead, we have to work harder, that's all, and co-operate with one another. This way, we will achieve our aims and overcome the adverse effects of the economic slowdown," he said.