

# PM: ALL TREATED EQUALLY

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By T. SELVA

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**SIBU, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told the people today not to listen to groups which were trying to split Sarawak from Peninsular Malaysia.**

He said these groups had been telling people in the State that Sarawak was not given importance by the Government.

"I hope the people understand that we give equal importance to all the States and no State is left out in our development plans," he said.

He was speaking to thousands of people who gathered at Padang Tun Tuanku Haji Bujang here today to welcome him and his wife on their two-day visit to the State.

Dr Mahathir said it did not make any differ-

ence whether the Government was in Sarawak or in Kuala Lumpur.

He said this was because the Government was dedicated towards working for the people's welfare.

"Although we may be far away from you, it does not mean that you are far away from our hearts."

On Barisan Nasional, he said it "was the only party that shared its powers with other parties" in the country.

"We give all races important roles in running the administration.

"We are not greedy for power and we share our power between all the races.

"In the past, several parties, including SUPP, Gerakan, and PPP, opposed the Barisan but now they have joined us.

"This clearly shows that we want to share the power with other races for the development and the interest of the people," he said.

Dr Mahathir assured the people that the Barisan would continue to provide them a strong and stable Government.

Earlier, Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud said the Sarawak Barisan would give its full support to Dr Mahathir's Government.

He said Dr Mahathir had brought a new era of development to Sarawak in trying to achieve a modern Malaysia.

Later, Dr Mahathir told a mammoth crowd at Kuching's Central Padang that the people needed only discipline to overcome the country's problems.

"And if the country is to continue to be progressive, this same discipline is needed," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should consider themselves lucky because the country was

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rich in resources and was not plagued by disasters like earthquakes or typhoons.

However, he said, they should also accept the fact that the country was badly affected by a worldwide recession and "whether they like it or not, development is affected."

While reassuring the people that development projects would continue albeit at a lesser degree, Dr Mahathir said "even if we shed tears or blood, we cannot have development at the same pace as before."

However, he said the effects of recession and other problems could be overcome if the people were disciplined.

Dr Mahathir advised the people to be patient because development would reach them sooner or later.

"The present government has never forgotten anyone. Those in Sabah, Sarawak and other States are all in one family.

"However, it is impossible to develop all areas at once. We have to wait our turn especially now when the economy is bad," he said.