

—Dr M rules out polls in— early May

By AHMAD A. TALIB

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday dismissed the possibility of the general election coinciding with the forthcoming poll in Sabah fixed for May 5 and 6.

Dr Mahathir also ruled out simultaneous federal and state elections throughout the country because Sarawak had its state election only two years ago.

Simultaneous federal and state polls can only be held in the peninsula, he told newsmen at a Press conference in

Kuching at the end of his two-day official visit to Sarawak.

"We cannot fix it together," he said in reply to a question whether the general election will be held at the same time as the Sabah election.

He declined to comment further on the subject. Dr Mahathir said his state visits in the past few months have helped him understand the situation better.

He said he was satisfied with the Barisan Nasional's readiness to face the general election whenever it is called.

"You will be surprised," he remarked when reporters pressed him to give more information on the election.

The Prime Minister was asked if he planned to visit Sabah to help Berjaya, the Barisan Nasional representative, during the state election.

He replied that it might not be appropriate for him to make a state visit in view of the election but Barisan leaders may go "if there is a need."

The Prime Minister, accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah left for Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Earlier, he declared open the \$1.5 million headquarters of the Party Bumiputera Bersatu Sarawak in Kuching and visited a Felda scheme in Lundu in the first division, 90 km from Kuching.