

Dr M: A spirit to emulate

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat.— Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised Barisan Nasional components to emulate the "give-and-take" spirit of the MCA when dealing with party problems.

The Prime Minister also credited the Barisan for Malaysia's excellent economic performance and added the party must continue being in power for the sake of the country and the people.

"Therefore, we should

not allow our parties to be problem-ridden, especially problems which may disunite us or affect our effectiveness. Problems should be solved through consultations with open minds.

Once problems have been solved all quarters must close ranks and strengthen the party and the Barisan Nasional.

"The MCA spirit of give-and-take should be an example to all Barisan Nasional component parties," he said at opening

of the 37th general assembly.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and Penang Chief Minister Dr Lim Chong Eu were among the other BN leaders present.

The Prime Minister admitted there were obstacles sometimes in BN but said they could be overcome with sincerity and co-

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Dr M: Pre-election tour for forging BN co-operation

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operation in the nation's interests.

"While we are loyal to the Barisan Nasional there can be conflicting views among component parties.

"Such conflicts could mean that supporters of a component party might not support a candidate from another component party. They don't view this candidate as a BN candidate but as a candidate from this particular party.

"Sometimes, an independent candidate is sponsored to defeat the BN candidate. This is very dangerous. If we do this to another component party, that party will do the same to our candidate in another area.

"Then both candidates may fail and the BN will lose. We must be sincere in supporting the BN during elections. Cheating by one side will only result in cheating by another side and, in the end, all sides lose."

Dr Mahathir told reporters later that his pre-election tour of the country was also an opportunity to impress upon BN leaders at State and divisional levels

on supporting BN candidates as candidates of the coalition and not view them as MCA, Gerakan, MIC or other candidates.

In addressing the MCA delegates, Dr Mahathir commended the party leadership, president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and deputy president Datuk Lee Kim Sai in particular, for resolving the recent leadership crisis.

He believed the majority of MCA members supported the resolution of the crisis.

The Prime Minister said the party's strength was paramount over any individual's position.

Winning party elections meant nothing if the party ended up losing the general election.

MCA members, he hoped, would fully support the winners in the party election in keeping with a basic element of democracy.

Quoting a Chinese proverb, he said one who faced a setback should not give up as the setback itself might bring one luck or other "good things" in future.

He advised that losers in any party contest should

not act negatively. As an example he cited the running down of the winners. This would weaken the party and its credibility questioned.

He labelled the opposition's attempts at forging a coalition led by Semangat '46 as "copycat" or "Barisan Tiruan" (Fake Front or Imitation Front).

"Our co-operation in BN has its basis. We are all moderate parties. We know that in a cosmopolitan country like Malaysia no one community can have all it wants. Each community has to consider the interests of the others.

"Those who cannot accept this cannot be in the Barisan. Opposition parties become opposition because they are not willing to give-and-take, be tolerant or be moderate."

Dr Mahathir said Pas extreme to the extent that the party felt that co-operation with non-Muslims would make them non-Muslim or kafir (infidel).

The DAP, on the other hand, could not accept the position of the Malays and other Bumiputera or any Islamic element.

He said the two opposition parties were now

trying to co-operate in the election. If they moved from their stance on these matters they would be cheating their own members.

Pas and DAP leaders had already told their members that the co-operation was only a ploy to win votes, he said. The pact was shallow, and temporary, one which could not assure a stable Government.

"If they set up a coalition Government it will not be stable. Businesses and industries will not progress. The security of the people will not be guaranteed."

"It will be a dark age for the country. The Barisan Tiruan parties will squabble over seats. It will be sad for the country. The strategy of Semangat '46 in setting up Barisan Tiruan is whereby a small party can ride to power on the backs of Pas and DAP.

"This fact is admitted by Semangat '46 leaders to their staunch supporters to assure the ex-Umno members among them that co-operation with Pas and DAP was only to win elections. They would not accept the Islamic State of Pas or the Malaysian Malaysia of DAP."