

# Dr M: I'm not backing independent candidates

By JAMES RITCHIE

KUCHING, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he has not given his support to any Independent candidate in the general election, and warned voters not to be fooled by individuals who say otherwise.

The Prime Minister said these individuals were "opportunists" looking after their personal interests.

"These people cannot say they are standing as Independents because I am supporting them. This is a big bluff. I do not support a single Independent. I only sup-

port the Barisan Nasional candidates from our component parties.

"I'm dissatisfied that there are candidates who claim to be so-called Barisan Bebas candidates. They're nothing more than opportunists.

"They cannot serve the people. All they want, and all that is important to them, is to be called "Yang Berhormat" and to get an allowance, of course," Dr Mahathir told reporters today on his way to Labuan as part of his tour of Sarawak and Sabah.

Of the 67 Independents contesting the parliamen-

tary election, 25 are from Sarawak and 24 from Sabah.

The Prime Minister advised BN component parties to act against their members who stand as Independents against BN candidates.

"We will advise component parties to take action against their members who stand as Independent candidates against the Barisan Nasional. If they were in Umno, they would be sacked and it will take them 10 years before they can apply to become members," he said.

In Sarawak, the Parti Pe-saka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) has already stated that it will sack two of its members for contesting against the BN.

At least four Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) and two Sarawak National Party (SNAP) members are contesting the election against the BN in Mas Gading, Serian, Selangau, Ulu Rajang, Julau, Bintulu and Kapit respectively.

Dr Mahathir then spoke of the *sandiwara* (drama) between Pas and the DAP.

"Pas claims that it is not working hand-in-hand with the DAP. Yet when we field an MCA candidate in a Chinese-majority seat, Pas purposely puts in a candidate to draw away the Malay voters from the MCA to help the DAP win."

"The DAP is also helping Pas by putting candidates to draw away Chinese support from an Umno candidate.

"The DAP enters with no hope of winning but hopes to draw away Chinese supporters from the BN and therefore allow Pas to win.

"It's very clear that this *sandiwara* is a big show of disagreement between Pas and DAP. It's just a stage show."