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Mahathir-politics

AVOID PAROCHIAL POLITICS FOR NATION'S GOOD, SAYS MAHATHIR

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ALOR SETAR, May 31⁹³ (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today reminded the people to avoid parochial politics which he said was unhealthy for a cosmopolitan country like Malaysia.

The prime minister said the people must give greater emphasis to solidarity of all the communities, religions and states to build a nation able to overcome challenges from within and outside.

"We cannot indulge in parochial politics because it is unhealthy for the country," he told reporters at his Hari Raya Aidiladha "open house" at his residence in Titi Gajah, here.

He was responding to questions on political developments in Sabah. He had launched the "Pesta Kaamatan" (harvest festival) in that state yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said that if the people of all the communities worked together, they could build the country into a developed nation by the year 2020. -- more

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Mahathir-politics 2 Alor Setar

Dr Mahathir said the component parties of the Barisan Nasional (BN) in Sabah were getting to be popular and garnering better support.

The functions he had attended in Sabah yesterday were also attended by people of the various communities, he said.

"If they are not pressured, they will be more inclined towards the Barisan Nasional," he said.

But he said it was difficult to predict the outcome of elections.

Replying to a question, Dr Mahathir said intimidation still existed in Sabah. -- more

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Mahathir-politics 3 Alor Setar

He said Umno leaders who had won the election with the assistance of Umno had been lured with offers of ministerial posts and big salaries, and that such tactics would continue.

"We cannot fight them in the use of intimidation, offers and the like. What we can do is explain to the people that these ways are unhealthy and will have disastrous consequences for Sabah," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was evident that the situation in Sabah had worsened because many had been taken in by the intimidation and offers of the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

Asked whether such offers were a form of corruption, the prime minister said they could be assumed to be so but it would have to be left to the courts to decide should there be complaints.

On the growth of Umno in Sabah, Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said the party was accepted by most of the people in the state and that it was prepared to face an election there. -- more

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Mahathir-politics 4 (last) Alor Setar

Dr Mahathir also advised Umno members and the people not to get excited over the Umno elections scheduled for November because he said it was a normal election and had nothing to do with the next general election.

He said it was up to the people of Sabah and Kelantan whether they wanted to support the Barisan Nasional.

The BN wanted to offer them a good administration but it was their choice if they wanted to reject it, he said, adding that they should not question the federal government for not helping if they suffered.

Dr Mahathir said there was no reason for the federal government to help state governments opposed to it because if it did, they would only say that the federal government had no choice but to assist. -- Bernama

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