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Mahathir-Pairin

PAIRIN HAS BROUGHT SHAME TO MALAYSIA, SAYS DR M

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BEAUFORT, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today described Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan as a person without honour and a shame to the country.

"Pairin was found guilty of corruption by the court but still does not want to vacate his post in the government and the party," he said. Pairin is president of Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

Dr Mahathir said Pairin's attitude had not only brought shame to Sabah and the people of Sabah but had also smeared Malaysia's name.

"Pairin's move to contest in the state election (on Feb 18 and 19) and lead the Sabah government is a dishonourable act and a shame," he said at a meet-the-people session at the Padang Bandaran, here.

"If he (Pairin) is a man of honour and a gentleman, he should resign from all government and political posts soon after the court had found him guilty," the prime minister said to applause from the 10,000 people present.

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Dr Mahathir said it was now up to the Sabah people to decide in the Feb 18 and 19 election whether to allow Pairin to continue to hold power.

The Kota Kinabalu High Court recently found Pairin guilty on a charge under Section 2 (1) of the Emergency (Essential Powers) Ordinance 1970 and fined him RM1,800.

"If he has dignity, he should resign as (chief minister). He should have resigned immediately after having been found guilty.

"We do not want a chief minister who wants only a good time. If he is not straight, we will have to replace him with another person. If the new person is also not straight, we will have to replace again.

"This is the BN promise. We can do this because we do not come from just one party," he said. -- more

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Dr Mahathir also said that Pairin's was a shallow struggle, devoid of principles and not a struggle based on safeguarding the welfare of the people.

He said the history of Pairin's struggle started with his anger towards former Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh.

On securing victory in the state election of 1985, Pairin did not think at all of helping people, instead he made them the victims of his actions, Dr Mahathir said.

"He only helps his family, even to the extent of being dragged to court (on charges of corruption). Do not look at the fine (RM1,800 fine which did not deprive him of holding his post and contesting in the election) as he is in the wrong no doubt.

"Do we want a chief minister whom the court itself has confirmed to be a criminal?" the prime minister asked.

Also present at the function were the prime minister's wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, Johor Menteri Besar and Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Melaka Chief Minister and Umno Youth leader Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik, Sarawak Chief Minister and Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) president Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) president Datuk Leo Moggie, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Information Minister and Umno secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat and Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa. -- Bernama

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