

UNIVERSITY PLEDGE

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Dr M: Barisan govt committed to developing Sabah

BEAUFORT: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has promised Sabah a full-fledged university should a Sabah Baru government under the Barisan Nasional come into power.

The Prime Minister said it was within the means of the Federal Government to build a university in Sabah.

But he said the Barisan government did not want to help Chief Minister Datuk Joseph Pairin now because Pairin's government was always fighting the Federal Government.

Dr Mahathir said the Federal Government had committed itself to a plan to help Sabah catch up with the other states.

"If the PBS remains in power, they can only build a primary school . . . a kindergarten, but when the Barisan comes into power, we will build a university," he said.

"We will always help the people of Sabah but not Pairin, who was first interested in fighting the Berjaya government and now the Federal Government."

Dr Mahathir said Pairin exploited the sentiments of the people in waging a personal campaign and not in enhancing the interests of the people and state.

He also pledged to set up a new Sabah government that is clean, efficient and trustworthy if given the mandate in the state elections.

Dr Mahathir said the new government would be different from the previous state governments under the coalition.

The Federal Government will ensure that a Barisan state government will keep up to the people's expectations.

"We assure you if a leader is not clean, he will be replaced. This is our promise," he said.

He said these pledges did not exist merely on paper but were programmes ready to get off the ground.

On the previous Barisan parties that ruled Sabah, Dr Mahathir admitted that despite development, there were problems.

"This time, we will ensure that a new state government under the Barisan will concentrate on development," he said.

The Chief Minister, he said, will be picked from the ranks of those who were serious, spirited and clean.

"If he does not carry out his task properly, we will change him. We don't want a Chief Minister who only knows how to enjoy himself," he said.

The Barisan, he said, had the power to put up or remove a chief minister.

Dr M. Pairin should give up his posts

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"We can do this because we do not come from just one party. The PBS is just one party. Only Pairin can decide who will go up or down," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Pairin should have resigned once he was convicted of corruption. "But here we have a leader who still wants to contest the elections and cling onto his chief minister's post. This is shameful," he said.

"Pairin should not lead his PBS and even think of contesting the elections," he added.

Dr Mahathir said if Pairin had any dignity, he would have given up his posts "like a gentleman and maybe give up his chief minister's post to a person like (Datuk) Bernard Dompok.

Dr Mahathir said now was time for Sabahans to free themselves from the control of Pairin who was not interested in the welfare of the people.

He said that after giving the PBS a chance to rule the state for the last nine years, the people must now topple Pairin's government.