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Mahathir-Sabah

MAHATHIR URGES SABAH PEOPLE TO REJECT PBS' DIVISIVE POLITICS

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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on the people of Sabah to reject Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) in the state election tomorrow and on Saturday because he said its divisive and hate politics can threaten the country's peace and stability.

He said the people of Sabah should make use of the opportunity of the election to switch to a Barisan Nasional (BN) government which can bring prosperity to the state and its people.

"The people of Sabah should not continue to allow themselves to be hoodwinked by the PBS. Nine years (under the PBS administration of Sabah) is enough. Everyone knows that the people of Sabah have not benefitted at all under the PBS government.

"If PBS had intended to help the people of Sabah all those nine years, surely the people in Sabah will be rich. But only certain people in PBS benefitted," said Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman, in a statement issued here. -- more

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Mahathir-Sabah 2 Kuala Lumpur

He said the issues raised by the PBS in its election campaign, such as arousing racial, religious and parochial sentiments and hatred towards the federal government and the peninsula, can undermine the racial and religious unity that has been in place for a long time.

"Does the PBS want to turn this country into a Bosnia-Herzegovina or Northern Ireland or Kashmir?" he asked.

Dr Mahathir said one of the issues which could provoke the people of Sabah was the allegation that if the chief minister was a Muslim, then all the churches in the state would be demolished.

They also claimed that the federal government wanted to colonise Sabah and that Umno went to Sabah for the same purpose, he said.

"They also claim that if the BN were to rule Sabah, the dialects of the ethnic groups in the state will be abolished and replaced with Bahasa Melayu while the customs, religions and cultures of the people of Sabah, particularly those of the Dusun community, will be abolished and these people will be converted to Islam and the Christians will be oppressed," he said. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said all these allegations were totally untrue and were raised intentionally because PBS wanted to instill hatred in the people of Sabah towards the peninsula to divert attention from the failures of the PBS government.

"The PBS slogan is 'Hate the Peninsula and Support PBS'. It does not matter what happens to Sabah if the PBS administers the state government," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the BN members in Sabah were also from among the people of Sabah.

"If the BN wins the election, it is only the Sabah people who are going to rule. But they will get the full backing of the federal government," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was puzzled by the attitude of the PBS, which he said wanted the support of the federal government but at the same time condemned the federal government during the election campaign.

"If the PBS allegations against the federal government are true, then why does it want to cooperate with the federal government?" he asked. --

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Dr Mahathir also criticised the PBS for raising hatred against the peninsula but at the same time selling Sabah government assets and the state's resources to people from the peninsula.

Actually, he said, PBS did not like the presence of federal government staff in Sabah for fear that its malpractices would be exposed.

He said he feared that PBS might have sold Sabah to certain people in the interests of the party and its leaders if not for the presence of officers of the federal government in the state.

Dr Mahathir invited the people of Sabah to ask themselves why Sabah under PBS administration had not developed compared with Sarawak, which had many non-Malays, when Sabah also had the wealth enjoyed by Sarawak, including royalty from oil.

"What has the PBS done with the royalty from oil? Why can Sarawak use the royalty from oil well but not Sabah?" he asked.

Dr Mahathir refuted PBS allegations that the federal government obtained 95 per cent of the royalty from oil, saying it received the same five per cent that the states were given. -- Bernama

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