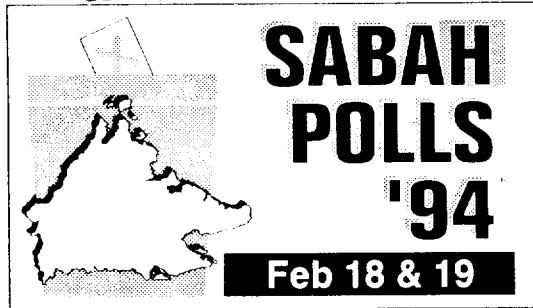


# Dr M: Issues raised by PBS can harm harmony

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KUALA LUMPUR: The issues raised by Parti Bersatu Sabah in the run-up to today's state elections can destabilise the nation's racial unity and religious harmony, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said the PBS still harped on issues of race, religion and parochial sentiments and also to create hatred against both the Federal Government and the people from the peninsula.

He said the issues raised could be detrimental to the unity achieved throughout the years and also posed a threat to the peace and stability of the country.

"Does the PBS want this country to end up like Bosnia-Herzegovina or Northern Ireland or Kashmir?" he asked in a

statement issued yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said among the issues raised by PBS included:

- THAT the Federal Government and Umno wanted to colonise Sabah;

- IF the Barisan Nasional is in power, the languages, customs, religion and culture of the people of Sabah, especially those from the Dusun tribe, would be eradicated, the

people would be converted to Islam and the Christians oppressed;

- IF the Barisan is in power, all tribal languages and dialects would be eradicated and replaced with Bahasa Melayu; and

- IF the Chief Minister appointed is a Muslim, all churches would be demolished.

Dr Mahathir said the issues raised by PBS was

simply to hide its failure from the people.

He said while PBS' theme was centred upon generating hate against the Federal Government, nonetheless the state government wanted its activities to be supported (by the Federal Government).

"If what PBS had said (about the Federal Government) is true, then why do they want to cooperate with us?"

On the other hand, Dr Mahathir said if the Barisan won the election, the coalition at state level would be led by the locals themselves.

"These people (in the BN Sabah) will have the Federal Government's full support."

Dr Mahathir said PBS' allegations, apart from being untrue, also reflected its fear of having Federal officers present in

the state.

He said this was partly due to the fear that its wrongdoings may be exposed.

"Fortunately, if not for these federal officers in the state, PBS might have sold Sabah to certain quarters in the party's self-interest," he said.

Dr Mahathir added that the questions which should be asked was why the state, under PBS' leadership, failed to prosper as compared to Sarawak.

"What Sarawak has, so does Sabah and this includes petroleum royalty but why is Sarawak developing while Sabah is not?"

Dr Mahathir also expressed hope that the people of Sabah would no longer be taken in by PBS as they had suffered long enough.