

PM: Ministry to appoint public auditors

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Speaking to reporters after an Umno supreme council meeting yesterday, Dr Mahathir said the party had agreed that the formation of the Barisan Nasional government in the state would be based on clean, efficient and trustworthy principles.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad also announced that the Anti-Corruption Agency would conduct investigations to determine whether there had been malpractices.

"In this light, the council has agreed to a suggestion by the state government that public auditors be appointed to audit the financial records of the previous government, the Sabah Foundation and its

subsidiaries.

"The Anti-Corruption Agency's investigation will determine whether the previous government had been involved in any malpractices," the Umno president said.

He also gave an assurance that BN would do its best to bring about development in the state.

In the initial stages, Dr Mahathir said, businessmen from the peninsula and Sarawak would be encouraged to go to the state to explore invest-

ment opportunities.

On Umno's special assembly in June, he said it would amend the party's constitution to check money politics.

Dr Mahathir said the council also discussed BN's defeat in the recent Lundang by-election in Kelantan.

Although the council did not go into detail, he said, it seriously viewed the campaign methods used by PAS.

Asked to elaborate, he said the council was con-

cerned about PAS' statements which distorted his speeches, the hudud laws and that he (Dr Mahathir) wanted to have his own interpretation of Islam.

On party matters, Dr Mahathir announced the approval of applications by MPs Nurnikman Abdullah (Kimanis) and Taimin Lumaing (Pensian-gan), both formerly of Parti Bersatu Sabah, and Datuk Paduka Hajjah Rahmah Othman (Shah Alam), formerly of Semangat 46, to join Umno.