

Be sincere, not arrogant, Barisan Nasional'

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PM: Serve regardless

leaders advised
of polls

By Farush Khan

MALACCA, Mon. --- Barisan Nasional leaders must serve the country and the people tirelessly, irrespective of whether there is a general election or not, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said as leaders, their services were needed all the time and not only during the election period.

"We want the country to continue to progress, not for their personal gains, but for the benefit of the people," he told BN leaders and supporters who greeted him and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali on their arrival at the Batu Berendam airport for a one-day visit to the State.

Also present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik, executive council members, State Assemblymen and senior government officers.

Dr Mahathir said leaders were supposed to work in line with government aspirations to develop the country towards greater heights.

and prosperity, saying that Malaysians should be grateful to live in a peaceful country.

He said in some countries, unlike Malaysia, the people could not easily approach their leaders at gatherings because the security situation was unstable and the leaders were afraid.

"There is no point of becoming a leader in a country that is undergoing racial disturbances and faces other major problems," said Dr Mahathir.

Although Islam was the official religion in Malaysia, there was freedom to practise other religions.

Malaysia does not believe in extremism, where one party tries to suppress others just to prove its strength, he added.

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"The nature of our jobs and areas under our jurisdiction may be different, but as leaders, we have responsibilities to serve the country and people," he added.

Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman, advised the leaders to carry out their responsibilities sincerely and not to be arrogant.

He drew much laughter from the crowd when he said that he wanted to "announce" that the general election would be held before the end of 1995, which is the end of the five-year term of Parliament.

Dr Mahathir also spoke on the country's stability

He said some places which practised extremism and suppression forgot the fact that they might be strong in some areas, but were weak in others.

Asked to elaborate after opening Ornasteel Enterprise (M) Sdn Bhd in Ayer Keroh later on the election issues, the Prime Minister said he merely wanted to remind the BN leaders of their responsibilities.

On the possibility that his statement on the election would cause BN members to start lobbying to be candidates, he said: "People do lobby all the time. Let them do so until their faces turn blue."