

Dr M: Orphans must start to be independent

By Jeffrey Ramayah

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Malaysians should sympathise with orphans by giving them financial aid and other support but such sympathy should not be excessive as the children who lost their parents might take such kindness for granted, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said Malaysians should continue to sympathise with orphans but these unfortunate children must not be given the impression that such aid and donations from well-wishers would be a permanent feature.

He said these children

must be taught to fend for themselves by earning incomes to supplement their studies although charitable organisations would look after their basic needs.

"They must learn to stand on their own feet and those in school must start to become independent by studying hard," he said before handing over Hari Raya donations to 341 orphans from the Federal Territory at the Tabung Haji Complex here.

"Orphans without disabilities must earn their own living and even the less handicapped must try to be self-dependent," he said.

Also present at the

function were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abang Abu Bakar Abang Abang Mustapha and the association's president Datuk Sulaiman Hashim.

Dr Mahathir said today's donation to the orphans was important as it showed that a Muslim organisation was giving aid to non-Muslims as well.

He said this showed that Muslims also gave assistance to non-Muslims as the Muslims wanted to strengthen relations with all communities.

He said this function should be an eye opener for non-Muslims as they

would realise that Muslims care for the less fortunate irrespective of religious background.

Later, speaking to reporters, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional would adopt a common manifesto which should be used by all States except for Kelantan and Sabah which would be allowed to have supplementary manifestos.

He said there was no need for all states to have supplementary manifestos as the common Barisan Nasional manifesto was sufficient.

The Prime Minister said there was a need for supplementary manifestos for Kelantan and Sa-

bah as the situation in the two states was different from other states.

On the Barisan Nasional supreme council meeting tomorrow, Dr Mahathir said the list of candidates for the general election would not be discussed.

"We will however discuss the principles of seat allocation in general," he added.

When asked whether the BN component parties had been asked to submit the proposed list of candidates for the election at tomorrow's meeting he said: "We have a lot of time before the election which could be held within the next 10 months."