

Dr M: Eradicate 'politics of hatred' to attain progress

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PENAMPANG, Mon. — The "politics of hatred", where individuals wanted to get involved in the administration of the country to spite other leaders, had to be eradicated for the nation to achieve its development targets, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said all politicians must be committed towards serving the electorate and ensuring that the country attained developed status although they might hold differing political views and ideologies.

Calling instead for the "politics of development", he said everyone was responsible in ensuring that Vision 2020 was attained since it aimed to improve the living standards of the population and industrialise Malaysia.

He said those who practised the "politics of hatred" should abandon the concept as it would not benefit the country but divide the people instead.

He said Malaysia had steered away from the racial politics which dominated the country after independence and its policy of sharing the wealth of the nation with all races had been a success which had prompted many other countries to launch similar systems.

Speaking at the launch of the first congress of Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS) at the Tun Mohd Fuad Stephens Hall here, Dr Mahathir expressed satisfaction that development efforts in Sabah were going on smoothly and the positive results of the Barisan Nasional's administration

were already visible.

He said the number of investors had increased, infrastructural development had improved, unemployment was falling, the tourism sector was booming and the people were enjoying better living standards.

He said the development strategies would continue to ensure more industries were located in rural areas, basic amenities reached all areas, and education and employment opportunities further improved.

The opening ceremony of the congress was attended by Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Tun Said, PDS president Datuk Bernard Dompok, Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah president Datuk Joseph Kurup, Sabah Progressive Party president Datuk Yong Teck Lee, Liberal Democratic Party president Datuk Chong Kah Kiat and Akar Bersatu president Mark Koding.

Also present were Sabah MCA liaison chief Datuk Fong Chan Onn, MIC vice-president Datuk M. Mahalingam, Gerakan secretary-general Datuk Chan Choong Tak, State Cabinet members, State Assemblymen and PDS members.

Dr Mahathir said PDS' membership in the Barisan Nasional was beneficial for the people of Sabah as they could be in the mainstream of development and further strengthen the political climate in the State and unite the people.

He expressed confidence that BN component party members would support PDS candidates in the forthcoming general election and urged PDS supporters to vote for BN candidates even though they were from other component parties.

He also thanked Dompok who during his speech had quoted facts and figures on

the socio-economic problems faced by Sabahans and added that the support for his speech was a clear indication that the people were moving away from politics based on emotions to development-oriented politics.

He said the Federal Government would give serious attention to the issues raised by Dompok, including establishing hostels for rural Sabah students to continue their studies in urban areas.

He said the Government would continue to provide the opportunity for the people to learn and acquire new skills so that they could become self-reliant and added that the people of Sabah, especially the indigenous people, should make full use of such chances to improve themselves.

He said only through acquiring skills could they improve their living standards and impart such skills to future generations which would assist their race to become more developed.

He said all Malaysians must be known for their ability to learn new and sophisticated techniques and technologies to propel the country into the industrialised era.

Earlier, on arrival at the old airport terminal in Kota Kinabalu this morning, the Prime Minister and his wife were accorded a red carpet welcome.

A large crowd comprising BN component party leaders, members and supporters were present to welcome Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

Dr Mahathir had lunch with the State Umno liaison committee leaders at the Chief Minister's official residence, Sri Gaya, before proceeding to the Istana where he called on the Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tan Sri Sa-

karan Dandai.

Later tonight, speaking at a dinner organised by PDS in Kota Kinabalu, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's achievement in conducting elections smoothly and without any untoward incidents has been attributed to the maturity of the voters and their understanding of the concept of democracy.

The Prime Minister said many countries had attempted to impose a democratic system but had failed because the leaders and the people did not completely understand what democracy entailed.

Dr Mahathir said while in Malaysia elections were seen as a common event every once in five years, in other countries elections resulted in bloodshed and even those who won ended up not being able to form the Government.

He pointed out that in Malaysia, whenever there was an election there were fierce debates and strong exchanges of words but eventually everyone voted for the party of their choice without any major incidents and the formation of the Government was smooth.

Dr Mahathir stressed that Barisan Nasional's strategy of sharing the administration of the country among 14 component parties was better than the two-party system implemented in many of the countries which practised democracy.

He said in the BN, all parties had to accept compromises and be satisfied with sharing administrative powers. In addition, the withdrawal of any one party from the power-sharing concept would not affect the Government in power, thus ensuring that development and other programmes continued smoothly.