

Dr M puzzled why Pas does not give due credit

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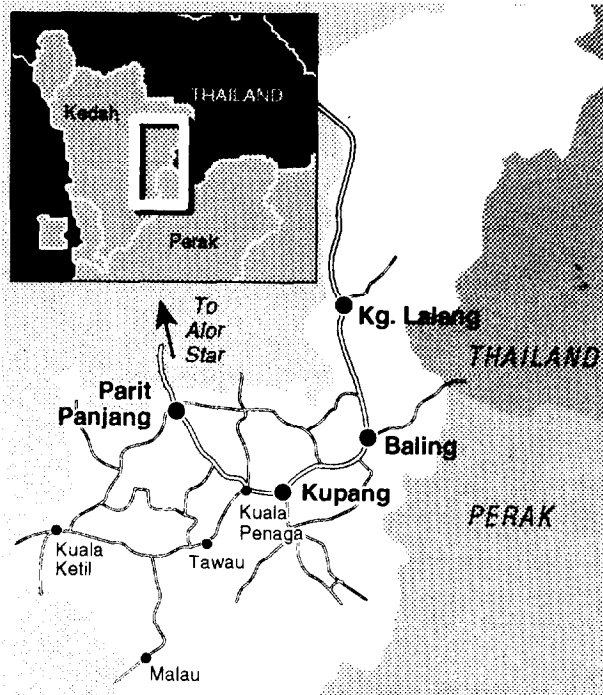
BALING, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he could not understand why Pas shied away from giving credit to the Government in developing the country when others have openly said they were keen to emulate Malaysia's success.

The Prime Minister said many developed and developing countries have credited Malaysia's progress to sound policies and prudent management, elements which they said they would want to have in their countries' administration.

Dr Mahathir said Pas and other opposition parties had instead tried to undermine the Government's efforts in developing the country. However, he was happy that this did not succeed, citing the development of this town as an example.

Baling, about 120km from Alor Star, is now developing rapidly. It used to be regarded as the poorest town in Kedah, if not the country, Dr Mahathir said. But the birth of a new township has given the sleepy hollow a facelift which also changed the attitude of the people towards active development.

The Prime Minister was here to declare open the new township. He arrived this morning accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali. Also present at the ceremony were Menteri Besar Tan Sri Osman Aroff, Baling MP and deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department Raja Datuk Ariffin Raja Sulaiman, Deputy Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir, and other State dignitaries.



Dr Mahathir's entourage, in sweltering heat, was preceded by a long line of youths riding motorcycles. Women carrying the *bunga manggar* lined the red carpet leading to the stage.

Members and supporters of the various component parties of the Barisan Nasional carried flags and banners pledging their support to the BN and Dr Mahathir.

An exhibition was also held in conjunction with the opening of the new township. Exhibitors included government agencies which displayed their products and services.

The Police and Armed Forces also participated in the exhibition. Armoured Personnel Carriers bearing the UN logo were also put on display while video shows on the involvement of the Malaysian armed forces in various United Nations peacekeeping missions were the centre of attraction at the fair.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's success was already well-known internationally. Many countries in Africa had made enquiries about

the Malaysian 'formula', as did countries from West Asia, who said that Malaysia was an exemplary Islamic country.

"And yet, Pas deemed it necessary to try to undermine our success. We have plenty of jobs. Our people do not have to work outside the country to survive. We have peace, freedom and prosperity. So, I just can't understand why Pas fails to see these successes and continues to attack the Government."

"Pas should lead its supporters in praising God Almighty for the country's success. We work hard day and night for this, and we should be grateful for all the wealth we have. Apparently, Pas does not see it that way, and that is why it continues to criticise the Government when the grounds for doing so are increasingly flimsy," the Prime Minister said.

He said Malaysia was moving towards more progress, which could only be seen if the people continue to work hard in a peaceful manner. He said the peace

in the country must be consolidated in every way.

There was no place for a fanatical brand of politics and illogical opposition. The people must reject them at every opportunity before they destroy the country and its people.

He said the people must continue to be grateful to God Almighty for all the success. The good life must not be taken for granted. It was only achieved following a lot of hard work and sound planning. Contrary to what some people think, the country's success was not achieved through coincidence, he said.

Earlier, the Menteri Besar, in his speech, hoped the people of Kedah would continue to rally behind the BN Government in the general election.

He said this was to enable the Government to sustain the State's remarkable pace of development.

"We must strive to strengthen the spirit of goodwill and tolerance amongst us and rally our support for the BN in order to sustain the country's vibrant economy," he added.

Osman recalled the days Baling was known as a very poor district.

"We have put the bleak years behind us and today, the people of Baling are well-off and obviously, these are the fruits of unity and the success of the BN Government," he said.

Osman also said besides the development of the Kampung Lalang new town, the State Government would open up industrial estates for small and medium-scale industries (SMIs) to lure local investors to the district.

"The presence of these industries will provide job opportunities for the locals and the efforts could only be realised with the support from the people of Baling," he added.

Raja Datuk Ariffin, in his speech, said the Government would strive to create between 800 and 1,000 jobs in Kampung Lalang within five years.