

Urban Malaysians urged to reflect on BN's contributions

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KUCHING, Mon. — Urban Malaysians have been urged to reflect on the contributions of the Barisan Nasional Government in bringing progress and better living standards to the people instead of relying on the Opposition which has not contributed anything for their well-being.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the people should vote for candidates who can help improve their living standards.

"There is no use voting for parties like the DAP which has contributed nothing to the people and cannot even offer constructive criticism. The party leaders prefer to bad-mouth others, make wild allegations and raise racial issues to gain political mileage," he said.

He was responding to reporters' questions after opening a RM2 million building for vocational and technical training at the

Chung Hua (No.1) School in Pending, near here. The reporters had asked for his views about people in the urban areas voting for the Opposition.

Dr Mahathir also said the candidates nominated by the Opposition do not have the calibre to serve the people.

"However, recent trends show a change in the attitude of the people who realise that the fast-paced development, good infrastructure and better living standards in urban areas were the contribution of the BN.

"I have confidence that the BN Government will receive wider support from people in major towns who are continuously benefiting from the programmes and projects implemented by the Government for their well-being," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Opposition leader Lim Kit Siang had not contributed anything to the nation nor the people of his constituency and continued to raise issues that could be consid-

ered "extremist" while the BN leaders advocated tolerance and moderation.

He added that when Lim was involved in a car accident, he blamed it on sabotage to gain sympathy from the voters.

He hoped that voters in urban areas would take into consideration the immense contribution of the ruling coalition and choose those who can offer more development and better amenities.

Earlier in his speech, he said Malaysians should be thankful that they lived in peace and harmony, where they were allowed to continue to practise their varied cultures, religions and learn and speak the language of their choice.

He said people in other multi-racial countries were sometimes even required to change their names and were not given the freedom to practise their culture and religion.

He praised the Associated Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sarawak (ACCCIS) for their RM2 million contribution to con-

struct the school building and added that this helped complement the Government's efforts to create a future generation which was well-versed in vocational and technical fields.

He added that the Government's move to allow private sector participation in the education field was aimed at making Malaysia an education centre of the region where students from other countries could come to further their education.

Among those who attended the ceremony were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud, Deputy Chief Ministers Datuk Alfred Jabu and Datuk Wong Soon Kai, Education Minister Datuk Dr Sulaiman Daud, Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding, ACCCIS president Tan Sri Wee Boon Ping and State Ministers.

The Prime Minister was given a warm welcome by the students who had lined the route to the school and had crowded the school cor-

ridors to catch a glimpse of him.

Abdul Taib in his speech said the change of emphasis in education to lay greater stress on science and technology augured well for the country.

However, he said, the task of transforming society into one that was well-versed in the science and technical fields lies not only with the teachers, schools and the Government but also with parents who must inculcate in their children the importance of these fields.

"We have to tell our children that science and technology is going to be our way of life."

He said parents must play a role in guiding their children towards taking a keener interest in science and technology.

He said ACCCIS had been exemplary in taking steps to prepare the community towards building a new kind of manpower based on science and technology.

He said that to enjoy a modern, united, industrial and progressive Malaysia,

all races must be prepared for the major transformation that is taking place.

Taib hoped that private Chinese schools would admit non-Chinese students to enable better interaction among the younger generation.

"Prosperity and racial harmony is essential. Over the last few years, there has been growing interaction among all races and growing realisation that we have to build this country together," he added.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah flew in this morning in a Falcon jet for a two-day official visit.

More than 2,000 people turned up at the Kuching International Airport to welcome them. They included Taib, Federal and State Cabinet Ministers, local dignitaries, senior Government officers and supporters of the four State BN parties.

Cultural dancers from the various ethnic groups and BN party flags added colour to the traditional welcome ceremony.