

Dr M: We will ensure no one causes trouble

By A. Kathirasen

BUTTERWORTH, Fri. — The Government will give maximum priority to the security of the nation and ensure that there is no rioting during the general election, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We cannot have riots no matter what happens. The Government will not allow any rioting ... but anyone who incites people to riot is breaking the law and appropriate action will be taken against such person or persons," he said.

Touching on a statement by DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang today asking Chief Minister Dr Koh Tsu Koon to clarify if it was true that the BN would start racial riots if the DAP captured Penang, Dr Mahathir said:

"This is his style ... to create concern and worry among voters so that he can win in the election.

"The BN does not have a plan to cause racial riots. Who brought peace and racial harmony to Malaysia? Kit Siang?"

Dr Mahathir was speaking at the opening of the RM92 million nucleus hospital at Seberang Jaya this evening.

Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Koh and his wife Chui Kah Peng, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Badawi and Health Minister Datuk Lee Kim Sai.

The hospital, which started operating on April 1, has numerous specialist services and in-patient service. Dr Mahathir later toured the place.

Dr Mahathir said Kit Siang had said he would be arrested after the general election. "Why did he say this? He wants sympathy. He's trying to say that if the people vote him in as Chief Minister, he can't be arrested. He has no other issues.

"We have no plans to arrest Kit Siang. However, if he breaks the law we have to take action. We are not bothered if he is leader of the Opposition as no one is above the law.

"If Kit Siang can't be arrested if he does wrong, then he is above even the Rulers. We must call him

His Majesty Kit Siang. Hmm... King Kit Siang."

The BN chairman said the DAP's Tanjung Three project to capture Penang would not succeed, just as Tanjung One and Tanjung Two had failed.

Dr Mahathir also said Pas was trying to mislead Muslims by claiming to follow Islam when in reality they did not follow Islamic tenets. Quoting several verses from the Quran, Dr Mahathir pointed out how the actions of Pas leaders were antagonistic to the tenets of Islam. Pas only used the Quran to fish for votes, he added.

Earlier this afternoon, Dr Mahathir urged Muslims in the country to show to the world that they were capable of administering the country in an effective and peaceful manner.

He said this would help to put right the misconceptions, especially among some Western nations, that Muslims were incapable of

running their own country as reflected by the problems and turmoils plaguing some Muslim countries.

"However, I am not surprised by the way some of the Western nations tend to look down on the abilities of Muslims in governing a country as what they really wish for is to see the Muslim countries adopting a Western style of democracy or government.

"What most of them do not know is that Islam has its own set of rules and regulations which can be applied to administer a country, including countries with a multi-racial nature with various communities of different races and religions living in them," he said after performing Friday prayer at the Bayan Lepas mosque.

Also joining the Prime Minister in performing the prayers, along with about 1,000 residents of the area, were Deputy Chief Minister

Datuk Dr Ibrahim Saad and Deputy Health Minister Datuk Mohd Farid Ariffin.

Dr Mahathir said the assumption by the West that Muslims were incapable of running a country could be put right by increasing not only our knowledge in Islam but also our determination to do what we know we can do.

He said, even now, Muslims in Malaysia have proven them wrong by showing to the world that they could administer the country well by adopting and implementing some of the Islamic approaches.

"For example, the Islamic banking and insurance and the Islamic pawning system introduced by Malaysia have been accepted, utilised and adopted not only by other Islamic countries but also by the non-Muslims in the country.

"Unlike in some other countries, Muslims here can pray and perform their reli-

gious duties in peace without fear or the danger of being attacked by followers of other religions or religious fanatics," he said, adding that the same also applied to followers of other religions.

He said it was also rare to find a country anywhere in the world other than Malaysia where people of different races and religions could work together and co-operate in peace in developing the nation without any fear of being attacked or killed.

As such, he said Muslims in the country must be appreciative of the peace which prevails in Malaysia.

"They should also not take it for granted that this achievement was easy to accomplish and made without any effort," he said, adding that this could not have been accomplished if not for the Government's way of running the country according to the rules and regulations which have been formulated for a multi-racial country.