

# PM: We're acting to ensure enough power for Penang

By Manan Osman and A. Kathirasan

PENANG, Sat. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Government is taking steps to ensure that a sufficient supply of electricity is provided to Penang.

He said among the measures were installing two additional submarine cables to the island and constructing a power station.

He said although the laying of submarine cables would cost the Government three times more in terms of expenditure, it had decided to go ahead with the project "for the sake of the people of Penang" and to ensure that Penang continued to prosper.

Furthermore, he said, it was imperative that Penang had sufficient power in view of the large number of factories in the State whose uninterrupted operations were critical.

"Besides the cables, there is the power station to fall back on. This is the measure of our concern for the people of Penang who gave the Barisan Nasional strong support in the last (general) election," Dr Mahathir said when launching the *Penang-BHL* (Ban Hin Lee Bank) *City on Parade* at Padang Kota this afternoon.

Dr Mahathir was referring to the June 25 fire which damaged the cables running under the Penang Bridge. As a result of the

fire, the island was without uninterrupted electricity for 10 days, disrupting industrial and commercial operations and causing hundreds of millions of ringgit in losses.

Following the damage to the three circuits, electricity supply to the island came only through two submarine cables — commissioned in 1979 connecting Prai on the mainland to Gelugor on the island — which can only carry a maximum of 170 megawatts of electricity a day. Penang island needs 330mw of electricity a day.

The new submarine cables, to run from Juru on the mainland to Bayan Lepas on the island, would be able to carry 500mw each.

At the time of the incident, Dr Mahathir was overseas.

Also present were the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, his wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and State tourism committee chairman Kee Phaik Cheep.

This year's parade is sponsored by Ban Hin Lee Bank in conjunction with its 60th anniversary celebration.

The Prime Minister said he was not trying to "bribe" the people by promising to give something after the election.

"Before the election, people can say I am trying to bribe or something like that.

"But what are political parties for if they do not make promises ... to do a lot of good things so that the people will support us.

"Some people of course make other kinds of promises. For example they want to be good cops ... Robocop," he said, in reference to DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang's election tactic to win over Penang in the April election.

"But let's forget about that. Now it is time to work," added Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir, in his capacity as BN chairman, also thanked the people of Penang for supporting the BN in the general election. This, he said, had ensured that the State would have a strong Government.

This is the Prime Minister's first visit to the island after the general election.

He said a strong Government could only be established if both the State and Federal Governments were from by the same party.

He pledged that the Federal Government would give every co-operation to the State Government in developing the State.

"This is our ambition. We have no other motive when contesting in elections. The BN Government is responsible for the peace and prosperity of the people.

"We do not want to be the Government just to show off

or ride in Mercedes cars," he said.

He reiterated that Malaysians should not take for granted the peace and harmony in the country. He urged Malaysians to value this healthy situation and work to ensure it continues.

The Prime Minister and his wife arrived at the site of the launch, in front of the State Legislative Assembly building, in a vintage car, as did Anwar and his wife in another vintage car.

In a lighter vein, he said:

"I came to officiate at the parade but ended up being part of the parade. This Madam Kee even makes use of the Prime Minister to promote tourism in Penang. But never mind, it is for the good of the people."

The procession wound its way through Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling, Lebuhraya Chulia, Jalan Penang, Jalan Dr Lim Chwee Leong, ending at Jalan Ria next to Komtar, a distance of 2.5km.

It featured Penang's entry to the floral fest in Kuala Lumpur on July 9 entitled *Penang Sunny Side Up* which won the Premier's Trophy. Dr Mahathir had a first-hand look at the float as Koh and Kee excitedly pointed out how it was made.

Other items on display in the procession were lion and dragon troupes, vintage cars, 50 superbikes, school bands and performances by cultural organisations of various races.