

29/11/1998

`Regardless of size, all must share in task'

KOTA KINABALU, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Barisan Nasional component parties, big or small, shared the same responsibilities in helping to achieve victory in the State elections.

He said some parties might only be given a seat to contest or none at all but still it was incumbent on them to ensure BN candidates, irrespective of party, win in the election.

The BN chairman said all component party candidates contesting in the election would be BN candidates.

Launching the new logo and flag of Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat at Shangri-La Tanjung Aru Resort, Dr Mahathir said contributions from all component parties were important to the coalition.

He cited Akar as an example of `a small' party which was shouldering the same burden as other `big' parties in the activities and political development in the country.

Akar is one of the nine BN component parties in Sabah.

The other parties whose leaders were at this function included Umno, Parti Demokratik Sabah, Sabah Progressive Party, Liberal Democratic Party, Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah, Gerakan, MCA and MIC.

The Prime Minister said though small, Akar had shown its commitment in bringing about political stability, not only in Sabah but the whole country.

"We should not think that being a State-based political party, our contributions or responsibilities are limited to that particular State," he said, adding that he was confident that Akar and other small parties would continue to play their role in achieving the aspiration of Malaysia becoming a developed nation by 2020.

On Akar's new logo and flag, the Prime Minister hoped that it would serve as a renewed aspiration of the party's efforts in enhancing its role in the field of political development.

Akar president Datuk Pandikar Amin Mulia, in his speech, said the party, formed nine years ago, would continue to work hand-in-hand with the other BN component members.

He said there was a need for the party to have a new look in its logo and flag in line with the latest development in the political scenario in the country.

"Over the years Akar had gone through many challenges ... I never dreamt to be the president," he said.

Pandikar, who is State Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, was the only Akar candidate who won in the February 1994 State elections.

He assumed the president's post as the result of a leadership crisis that led to the resignation of founding leaders Datuk Mark Koding, Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan and Datuk Monggoh Orow.

(END)