

27 DEC 1999

Mahathir-Campaign

DON'T CAMPAIGN AFTER THE ELECTION, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

JITRA, Dec 27 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today political parties no longer need to campaign as though they were still facing the general election, so that things could calm down.

The Prime Minister said on the contrary the people need to mend relations among themselves after the 10th general election held on Nov 29.

They must clear the banners, flags and posters so that they could easily communicate with each other and close ranks, he said before breaking fast with the people at Kampung Naga, here.

"Let's become a society without banners.

"If they want to put up the party flags, do so in the house and not outside as though (they) want to maintain the rivalry," said Dr Mahathir who is also Umno president and Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman.

Dr Mahathir said relations within the community must be mended so that they could live in comfort and prosperity.

There must be an atmosphere of friendliness within the community after the election was held to select candidates to form the federal and state governments.

The Prime Minister was grateful that the general election in the country could be held in peace without riots and bloodshed.

"Forget the harsh words used during the election campaign and now the community needs to forgive one another and become friends," he said.

The general election, he said, would not be held for another five years, so the political parties need not continue campaigning as though they were in an election atmosphere.

Dr Mahathir said not many people understood what general election meant because they thought it was like a battle field.

In some countries, they were willing to kill candidates and certain personalities, he said.

However, in Malaysia the community had an opportunity to campaign, solicit for votes and cast their vote safely during the election.

As for Muslims, he said, they should uphold the teachings of Islam that they were brothers although they belonged to different parties.

Thus, Muslims should not continue to be enemies after the general election and should return to the teachings of Islam which called on its followers to unite.

Also present were the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and Menteri Besar Datuk Syed Razak Syed Zain.

About 1,000 villagers attended the gathering.

-- BERNAMA

JM AO