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Grand welcome planned for Dr M during visit to Sabah

KOTA KINABALU, Tues. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be given a grand welcome when he arrives on Thursday for his first visit to Sabah after the Barisan Nasional victory in the recent State election.

About 10,000 people, including leaders and members of BN component parties in Sabah are expected to throng the Kota Kinabalu airport to welcome the Prime Minister who is scheduled to arrive at 2pm.

A committee headed by Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Agriculture Development and Food Industry, Datuk Lajim Ukin, is overseeing preparations for Dr Mahathir's visit.

Lajim said 70 horsemen from Kota Belud, Sabah Polo Association and Sabah Turf Club will lead the procession during Dr Mahathir's 15-minute drive to the Pan Pacific Sutera Hotel where he will be staying.

Soon after his arrival, Dr Mahathir who is also the BN chairman, will attend a closed door meeting with State Ministers, Assistant Ministers and BN State Assemblymen at the hotel.

He will attend a tahlil at the State Mosque before proceeding to the Likas Stadium to attend a thanksgiving gathering for the BN victory in the March 12-13 election.

The BN had won 31 of the 48 State Assembly seats, while the rest were won by the opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah.

Lajim said about 30,000 people are expected to attend the gathering.

On Friday, Dr Mahathir will be in Ranau, about 108km from here, to address some 10,000 BN supporters to fulfill his promise to visit the district after the election.

He was supposed to address a gathering at the Ranau community centre on the eve of the election but had to cancel his trip due to bad weather.

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