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Kadazandusun `too long victims of PBS'

PAPAR, Tues. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the time has come for the Kadazandusun community to support Barisan Nasional as it has too long been the victims of Parti Bersatu Sabah's leaders.

Dr Mahathir said the BN was the best formula for the Kadazandusun to realise their rights, as BN component parties are given equal opportunities to make their views heard, no matter how small the party.

He said the BN would never again accept any offers of co-operation from the PBS after the party abruptly decided to leave the BN on the eve of the 1990 general election.

"It was a stab in the back," said Dr Mahathir during the ground-breaking ceremony for the camp of the 16th brigade of the General Operations Force here today.

Dr Mahathir said BN did not want to ostracise the Kadazandusun people, and realised they possessed rights like other Bumiputera communities.

However, he said the community was side-lined by certain PBS leaders who grabbed all the positions.

Dr Mahathir said the BN, realising the importance of Kadazandusun representation, decided to open its doors to them, including Tan Sri Bernard Dompok's Upko party and Tan Sri Joseph Kurup's PBRS.

As such, he said the time had come for them to support the BN through Upko, PBRS and Umno to claim their stake in Government.

"If not, then areas where Kadazandusun are the majority will lose out because it would be impossible to see progress in these areas," said Dr Mahathir.

He later accepted former PBS strongman and former Akar president Datuk Mark Koding's application to join Umno.

Later, addressing BN campaigners and workers in Kota Kinabalu, Dr Mahathir hoped that Sabah BN would deliver a minimum of 16 parliamentary seats.

He said it was not impossible for the BN to win all the 20 parliamentary seats in Sabah if all the component parties worked in cohesion.

He also said that there was no reason why the BN could not win in Kadazandusun constituencies which are traditionally Parti Bersatu Sabah strongholds.

"The Kadazandusuns should not allow themselves to fall victim to Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan's grand ambition to remain as the paramount leader of the Kadazandusun," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said voters, especially BN supporters, should not look at the candidate but the BN as a whole as it was the BN which would form the government and not the candidate.

Dr Mahathir said it was the responsibility of BN workers to ensure that all BN supporters come out to vote on polling day.

Speaking to reporters at the Kota Kinabalu airport before leaving for Sarawak tonight, Dr Mahathir said BN was not only confident of a strong showing in Sabah but in Kelantan as well.

"There is a possibility we will win and be able to form a Government (in Kelantan)," he said.

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