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Mahathir-Sabah (Harris)

MAHATHIR: NO WAY I'M GOING TO COOPERATE WITH HARRIS, PAIRIN

PAPAR, March 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad declared today that he would not cooperate with the two former chief ministers Datuk Harris Salleh and Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan who are leading their own parties to fight the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) in the state election.

The prime minister said the BN had closed its doors for Harris-led Bersekutu and Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan's Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

" No way for Harris in BN," he repeated thrice when speaking at a meet-the-people session here, about 50km from Kota Kinabalu.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, also said PBS would not be accepted again into the BN fold as " they have stabbed us on the back at the eleventh hour in the 1990 general election."

" How can we work with someone who has stabbed us in the back although they say they want to cooperate with us now," he said.

Dr Mahathir called on Sabahans to reject Bersekutu, PBS and PAS as they cannot form a strong and stable government in Sabah.

" The federal government cannot cooperate with other parties except the State BN," he told a cheering crowd of BN supporters.

Dr Mahathir alluded to Pairin's claim that the PBS had its own way to cooperate with the BN and the federal government if it came to power after the March 12 and 13 election.

" Pairin may have his ways but no way the BN and federal government can cooperate with him," he said to a loud applause.

On Harris, Dr Mahathir said although he was his friend, he (Harris) was a difficult man to deal with.

" He seems to know everything and when talking to him, he would not allow others to butt in.

" I know he (Harris) is clever to plant trees and rattan. It's better to ask him to plant trees and rattan to make money rather than contesting in the election.

" Believe me, Harris and Pairin will not be able to form government. Reject them and their parties, instead support the BN which can form a strong government. I promise the federal government will continue to help Sabah," he said.

Commenting on PAS' participation in the state election, Dr Mahathir said the party was contesting in six seats to defeat the BN and not to form the government.

" PAS is prepared to cooperate with PBS in Sabah to topple Umno. In the peninsula, Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat (Kelantan Menteri Besar) said PAS was even prepared to cooperate with the satan to win in the general election. Can we trust such people,? he asked.

According to Islam, a person can cooperate with anyone except the satan, he said.

"If PAS can cooperate with the satan, then it is definitely not an Islamic party but one which uses Islam for its political interests," he said.

Unlike PAS, Dr Mahathir said Umno cooperated with all the BN component parties which represented the various races in the country.

Dr Mahathir also said elections are held to elect a party that could form a stable government and not individuals to be called "Yang Berhormat" who could not serve the people.

" That's why the BN is contesting in all the 48 seats in Sabah because

it has the capacity to form a government and bring development to the state," he said.

Although PBS and Bersekutu also fielded candidates in all the seats, they cannot develop this state if they were given the mandate because " we (federal government) will not help them," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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