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Manifesto to pledge continued progress, harmony

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JENGA, Tues. - Continued development and racial harmony - this will be the Barisan Nasional's pledge in its manifesto for the coming general election.

Making this revelation for the first time today, BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad indicated that the manifesto reflected the coalition's commitment to continue serving the people efficiently.

"We do not want the (multi-racial) people to harbour ill-feelings against one another, but to acknowledge the good things given by the BN Government," the Prime Minister told a Press conference at the end of his overnight visit to Pahang.

He said the BN Government would continue to implement policies that had benefited the people of all races since independence.

Dr Mahathir stressed that the Government aspired to continue to develop the country under a harmonious atmosphere, without causing tensions among the people of various races and religions.

He said the BN's approach was different from that of certain parties which were prepared to harp on religious and racial sentiments and hurt the feelings of the various communities just to gain support.

He cited a case in Selangor in which a khatib (mosque official) delivering a Friday sermon had claimed that in his opinion there were more churches than mosques in Malacca.

Describing the claim as "an obvious lie", Dr Mahathir said it was a clear attempt by the khatib to strain the relationship between the Muslims and non-Muslims.

"But the BN will continue to emphasise on harmony ... we will not resort to activities that can cause racial strain," he said.

Asked on the dispute between the MIC and PPP, Dr Mahathir said it was BN's internal problem and could be resolved.

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