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PM thanks voters for giving mandate to BN

KOTA KINABALU, Thurs. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today thanked Sabah voters for giving the Barisan Nasional a convincing mandate in the March 12-13 State election, saying they had re-elected a strong and efficient Government.

"I congratulate the people of Sabah for electing a party that is part of the Federal Government," the Prime Minister and BN chairman said tonight. "It is easy for the Federal Government to work with a State governed by the same party."

Dr Mahathir arrived earlier here today for his first visit to Sabah after the election in which he had campaigned intensively. He was in Sabah four times during the State election.

Addressing a large meet-the-people session at the Likas Stadium, the Prime Minister said the big win of 31 seats for BN against 17 for the Opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah was crucial in bringing greater progress to the State.

"BN was able to form the State Government without help from others ... this will be a strong and efficient Government," he said.

He said the Federal Government was aware that the people yearned for more development. All areas, he added, would be developed in stages.

At the gathering tonight, each of the 20 Umno divisions in Sabah displayed banners proclaiming support for the party leadership.

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