

# LDP: Mahathir the reason why Chinese back BN

KUNDASANG, Sun: Chinese-based parties in the Barisan Nasional are not the reason why there has been a drastic shift in Chinese support to the coalition in Sabah and federal elections.

The president of the Chinese-based Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, said today strong Chinese support is due to the trust they had in Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking at a press conference after he opened LDP's 11th party congress here, he said in Sabah's case, despite a shift to the BN, the Chinese generally continued to support the opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS).

The LDP is one of the four Chinese parties in the Sabah BN. The others are Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), MCA and Gerakan.

"This shift is very much because of BN and his (Mahathir's) policy to ensure that all races have a share in the economic cake and in the country's affairs. It is not because of LDP, MCA or SAPP," Chong said.

LDP has 21 divisions, with more than 60,000 members.

On the difference LDP would make as a Chinese party, Chong said when it was formed 11 years ago, the MCA and Gerakan had not yet expanded to Sabah, while the SAPP did not exist.

There were only Usno and

PBS fighting for the people's support, he said.

"We then felt there was a need to give direction to the Chinese, even though we are multi-racial," he said.

Chong said many had dismissed LDP as "a mosquito party", but "we have survived and will contribute in our own small way to the country without shouting or shows".

Addressing the 518 delegates at the congress, he said Malaysians should reflect on the 43 years of peace, prosperity and stability they enjoyed.

He said Malaysians returned the Barisan Nasional with another two-thirds majority in the last election despite the various challenges to its rule and this was witnessed by the foreign media like the CNN, CNBC, ABC and BBC.

"However, we can no longer afford to take things for granted," he said.

Chong said a series of unexpected security-related incidents, including the hostage-taking incident in Sipadan, several explosions in Kota Kinabalu and the shocking arms heist in Grik and the Sauk stand-off were lessons for Malaysians.

The LDP, he added, will convey its appreciation to the Armed Forces chief and Inspector-General of Police for their professionalism in handling the recent security-related incidents.