

Big BN win shows no place for dirty tactics: PM

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Barisan Nasional's resounding victory in the Sarawak state elections last night was proof of the people's rejection of rough and dirty tactics of peninsula-based opposition parties namely PAS and Keadilan.

The Prime Minister said this went to prove that such gutter tactics were not only unacceptable in Sarawak but also in the Peninsula.

"Using rough tactics is not in our culture and I hope others will also reject them," he said at a media conference after opening the 69th Federation Dentaire Internationale-World Dental Congress 2001 at Stadium Putra in Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur last night.

He said this time the Sarawak BN performed even better than the last state elections as the opposition only won a seat through the DAP in Kidurong while another seat, Meluan went to an independent.

PAS, which contested three seats and Keadilan, 25, failed to win any seat.

Dr Mahathir said that by rejecting PAS and Keadilan the electorate in Sarawak showed that there was no place for intimidating and threatening tactics.

"This is not a democratic way. They (PAS and Keadilan) thought democracy gives them the freedom to make threats," he said.

He said Keadilan was obsessed with fielding a large

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Victory proof of people's rejection of gutter tactics

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number of candidates only to see 11 of them losing their deposits.

On alleged disunity among Sarawak Malays and Melanau, the Prime Minister said such notion obviously had no basis and no bearing on the outcome of the election.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi congratulated the Sarawak BN for its landslide win and said the people have made a wise choice.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the victory showed that the BN had worked hard and gained the confidence of the people in Sarawak.

Abdullah, who is in Saudi Arabia on a visit since Monday, also said the BN would ensure the continued progress of Sarawak.

He thanked the people of Sarawak for placing their trust in the BN.

In Kuching, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said the landslide victory by BN will spur the state assemblymen to work with greater determination to bring development to the state.

The win showed that the efforts of the Government in the past five years had received recognition from the people in the state, he said.

"The people's confidence will spur the BN to scrutinise its strategy to intensify development efforts although we are expected to face the effects of the world economic recession."

He said this at a media conference immediately after all the election results were announced with BN winning 60 of the 62 seats contested.

With the victory, he hoped the BN leadership, especially at the Federal level, would be appreciated by the people in facing the expected global economic recession. "We need Dr Mahathir... this is what the people of Sarawak said," he said.

Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said the victory reflected the confidence of voters and the Sarawak people in the BN leadership.

"I believe this is the response and appreciation of voters for Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud. I am confident the BN leadership will once again give him the trust to lead the BN Government in Sarawak," he said when interviewed by RTM.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu described the victory as the greatest gift from the people of Sarawak to the Prime Minister. "This confirms that his leadership is foolproof."

Gerakan secretary-general Chia Kwang Chye said the decision of the people in Sarawak was most welcome as it was a vote for national development. — Bernama