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Dr Mahathir: Victory shows people's appreciation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Barisan Nasional's landslide victory in the Sarawak election clearly proved that the people appreciated the development brought by the BN-led Government headed by Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud.

The Prime Minister and BN chairman said the increased majority in 60 of the 62 seats contested also proved that the people rejected "gung-ho" politics practised by the opposition.

"I congratulate Tan Sri Taib Mahmud, all our candidates and election workers for their untiring contribution," he said after attending the FDI World Dental Congress 2001 opening here tonight.

"This victory shows that the people reject politics without any concrete basis and politics of hatred which is not in line with our culture."

Dr Mahathir said although the opposition had embarked on unacceptable politics by employing dirty campaign tactics, the people were wise enough to determine their future.

"The opposition misused its freedom and launched personal attacks on the Chief Minister but the Sarawak people turned around and showed them (opposition) the way out."

Dr Mahathir said allegations that the Sarawak Malays were divided had also been proven to be a lie as they gave their support to the BN Government.

Their solid support, said the Prime Minister, was enough to put a stop to the opposition's dream of wresting Sarawak from BN.

Dr Mahathir said that having won the elections, BN candidates must now work harder to fulfil their pledges.

"We cannot go back on our word, what we have promised must be delivered by all means," he said.

Dr Mahathir said there were also clear indications, both in Sarawak and in the peninsula, that BN had regained lost ground.

"People are more friendly now, especially if compared to the 1999 scenario. Back then they were upset over certain matters and thought that I had mistreated a certain popular leader but now they have started realising the truth.

"This is something refreshing."

He added that at that point of time, he had to do what was right and not something that was popular.

"I believe the truth will continue to prevail and the public will realise and accept this fact," the Prime Minister said, clearly referring to former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.