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Reject violent culture, says Dr Mahathir

KUCHING, Mon. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today advised the people of Sarawak to reject the violent culture propagated by Pas and Keadilan, adding that the ideologies of these parties would split the people.

The Prime Minister said prior to Pas' and Keadilan's entry into Sarawak, all the elections were conducted peacefully and without any reports of violence.

"We are sad that these two parties have brought along with them their violent culture, which they propagate in the Peninsula," he said after chairing a meeting between Barisan Nasional component parties in Sarawak and community leaders at Merdeka Palace Hotel.

He said members of these parties used foul language and would threaten others with legal action if their flaws or weaknesses were exposed.

"Their tactic is to scare people off so that no one will dare to accuse them of anything. They use libel suits to achieve this," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Opposition was out to disunite the people, especially the Malays and Muslim communities in the State.

He said although the Opposition claimed to be united under the Alternative Front, their relationship was actually a fallacy.

"They call themselves a Barisan, but it is actually a Barisan tiruan," he said, adding that they would contest against one another in an election.

Dr Mahathir said this was evident in the Sarawak polls where Parti Keadilan Nasional had fielded candidates to contest against Pas candidates, which in return had fielded candidates in constituencies contested by the DAP.

Asked why Keadilan was contesting in Sarawak after it was rejected in other places, Dr Mahathir said the party would contest anywhere even if it had only two supporters.

Asked about the BN's chances in the State election, the Prime Minister said he was confident the coalition would do well.

He said based on his visit to four areas today, the support from the people to the Barisan Nasional was overwhelming.

On continued claims by certain quarters outside the State BN that they enjoyed Umno's support, Dr Mahathir said Umno had no reason to do so.

"We are not sponsoring anyone. Like I said, it is not Umno's habit to stab their friends in the back."

Later, speaking at the meet-the-rakyat-session at Stadium Perpaduan tonight, Dr Mahathir told voters in Sarawak to reject candidates who have no foundation for their political struggle.

He said most of the candidates are personalities who found no place in their original parties and were disappointed for not making the grade.

"These are political rejects. I am sure the voters in Sarawak are not easily gullible by their sweet talk and promises which they cannot keep," he told the audience.

He likened the candidates from the opposition parties to opportunists who thought they could get some money by contesting against established BN candidates.

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