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Sarawak-Mahathir (election)

USE STATE ELECTION TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE, DR M TELLS SARAWAKIANS

SEMOP (Sarikei Division), Sept 24 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on Sarawakians to use Thursday's state election as yet another opportunity to bring about improvement to their quality of life.

The Prime Minister said they should not be influenced by the opposition which was bent on sowing hatred against the government.

"In reality, they will never be able to do anything for the people," he said when opening the RM55-million water supply project that would benefit about 13,000 people on Pulau Bruit and in Serdeng here.

Dr Mahathir said the federal and state governments were focusing attention on developing every part of the country.

"In doing so, we will not neglect even the smallest of place especially areas without water and electricity supply," he said.

He assured the people in Sarawak that the federal government would assist the state government to develop isolated places like Pulau Bruit where about 60 per cent of the islanders lived in poverty.

He said the federal government was aware that there were still many places especially in Sabah and Sarawak with a big population of poor people.

He said the federal government would continue to provide more allocation to help improve the situation.

"This is not an empty promise. We will fulfil them unlike the opposition party leaders who can only talk and criticise.

"Whatever we can spend, we will spend for the people's benefit. We need to ensure the government's income is fairly distributed to all places in the country," he said.

He said it was fortunate that the incomes of the federal and Sarawak state governments had been increasing significantly from day to day.

Touching on the Sarawak state election, Dr Mahathir, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said he was confident the BN would again form the next state government with the people's support and cooperation.

He said Sarawak was a state with vast potentials given its size as big as Peninsular Malaysia.

"With a strong state government, Sarawak can be further developed to be on par with some of the developed states," he said.

A resounding win would enable the BN state government to develop isolated places like Pulau Bruit immediately.

In this regard, he asked Agriculture Minister Datuk Effendi Norwawi, who is also the Member of Parliament for the area, to plan for its development.

Dr Mahathir said he was disappointed with the lack of development in the area which was described by Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud in his speech earlier as the most backward place in the state.

The prime minister said it would take time to bring significant development to the area in view of the high cost involved

He called on the people here to vote for the BN incumbent for Serdeng Datuk Mohd Asfia Awang Nassar so that what had been and are being planned could proceed uninterrupted.

Mohd Asfia, the State Legislative Assembly Speaker, who is defending the seat for the third term, is being challenged by Awang Kadir Madahan, an independent.

Pulau Bruit is part of the Serdeng state constituency. It has 6,385

Melanau/Malay voters, 1,647 Ibans and 70 Chinese.

Together with the other state constituencies of Belawai and Matu-Daro, they formed the Kuala Rajang parliamentary constituency.

-- BERNAMA

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