

Keadilan losing support, says PM

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LANGKAWI: Many Parti Keadilan Nasional members are no longer interested in its struggles and are leaving the opposition party, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said yesterday the defection of Keadilan leaders in Perlis on Saturday and the problems affecting the opposition front was an indication that Barisan Nasional stood a good chance of winning the Indera Kayangan by-election.

He said this after a luncheon at Oriental Village following his visit to several key development projects in

Padang Matsirat and Burau Bay here yesterday.

On Saturday, Keadilan by-election co-director Mej (Rtd) Mohd Shariff Abd Razak and eight other Perlis party leaders resigned to join Umno.

Mohd Shariff had attributed the defection to the members' disillusionment with Keadilan's struggle which he had likened to "the pot calling the kettle black."

He also claimed that members were unhappy with the party's choice of candidate, Khoo Yang Chong.

Dr Mahathir also chided PAS and Keadilan for "hitting

below the belt" for using the issue of the death of the Perlis Menteri Besar's son as a topic during their election campaign.

"They have run out of issues and would resort to using anything, even someone's death to campaign for votes. This is not a nice thing to do and it's also not in our culture to do so.

"We must respect the sorrow (of the family). Even if an opponent faced death, we cannot say 'serves you right'. (Walaupun musuh kita menghadapi kematian, kita tak akan kata padan muka)," he added.

He also described as "unreasonable" the claim by the opposition that Barisan had staged a *sandiwara* during the Sauk incident last year.

On the case of a 17-year-old secondary student in Besut, Terengganu, who was arrested last Thursday for possessing three explosives and ammunition, Dr Mahathir said he did not know what was happening nowadays as even students were turning violent.

"Obviously, there is someone behind this who is teaching the students to be violent. This is what we see.

"This is also not our culture

as we are not a violent race. But obviously, there are some quarters who are interested in bringing a foreign culture into the country which is prone to violence," he added.

On the suspected militant group operating in Singapore which may have links with a network in Malaysia, the Prime Minister said the Government would get more information from Singapore on the matter.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived in Langkawi on Saturday, visited the Morac International Go-Kart Racing Circuit in Padang Matsirat, the Langkawi croco-

dile farm, the RM25mil extension project at Berjaya Langkawi Beach & Spa Resort and the RM45mil cable car project at Oriental Village in Burau Bay.

Earlier at the Morac Go-Kart Racing Circuit, Dr Mahathir met with the Malaysian Go-Kart Team - Rodney Magness, Farhan Fauzy, Raja Razman Raja Idris and Mahathir Ngau.

After that, he was given a briefing on the progress of the project at Berjaya Resort by architect Wan Fatiman Md Arshad from the Alor Star-based Anak Arshad Architect.