

Dr M not bothered by the label 'dictator'

KUCHING: Being labelled a "dictator" by the Western media does not bother him, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

As long as he could help develop the country and make the world respect Malaysia, he said he did not mind being called a dictator.

"I am a dictator who has been elected, not once, but five times. And I am the only dictator who has resigned before

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his term is up).
"If they want to call me a dictator, that is okay. I think it is an honour," Dr Mahathir said, tongue in cheek, when opening the 10th general assembly of Parti Pesaka Bumiputra Bersatu at the Holiday Inn Damai Lagoon Resort near here yesterday.

He said the important thing was that "we have to develop the country and make people respect us."

He said the country's rapid development, peace, prosperity and harmonious life enjoyed by the various races were the greatest rewards for the nation's leaders.

Dr Mahathir said that, unlike previously, many people in the world now know where Malaysia was and the country had developed much over a short span.

"Malaysians have a lot to be thankful for. Ours is a multi-

racial country that is peaceful and happy.

"In Malaysia, we are safe wherever we go. We have to give our love to this country."

Dr Mahathir criticised PAS for teaching people to be ungrateful to the Barisan Nasional government and not being thankful for what was given.

The Prime Minister said PAS had been ruling Kelantan for so long but the state con-

tinued to lack development.

"I feel sad because Kelantanese are talented people but they have to migrate to Kuala Lumpur for a better life," he said.

Commending the Sarawak Government, Dr Mahathir said it had brought tremendous development to the state.

"Development goes on all the time in Sarawak because we have a strong government," he said.