

15 JAN 2003

Mahathir-Kelantan

DR MAHATHIR PROMISES TO BRING CHANGE TO KELANTAN

KOTA BAHARU, Jan 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad promised the people of Kelantan today that he would improve conditions in the state if they return the Barisan Nasional (BN) to power in Kelantan in the next general election.

The prime minister that everytime he visited Kelantan, he was sad because there was no change but instead the situation had deteriorated, the state was dirtier and the businesses were still small.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please don't give (PAS) another chance," he said when addressing thousands of people at a leader-with-the-people gathering at the Maktab Sultan Ismail field, here.

Dr Mahathir, who is accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, is on a two-day working visit to Kelantan.

He said Umno would change and its leaders would also change with their places being taken by those who were really sincere but was quick to add that that did not mean that the past leaders were insincere.

He said that those who elected people who were incapable of bringing change were inviting calamity upon themselves and the state.

He said the people should reject PAS because it was Umno and not PAS that fought for Islam.

"PAS' struggle was to oppose Islam because since PAS came into being, the Malays had been disunited...during the time of the British the Malays were not disunited.

"Umno is recognised throughout the world as the champion of Islam. They say that Malaysia is a model state for other Muslims countries and it's Umno that has made it so.

"Don't worry, ladies and gentlemen. Umno fights for the Muslims and is responsible for all Muslims. Everyone should support Umno if they uphold Islamic teachings," he said.

The prime minister said that the Barisan Nasional government led by Umno had proven that it could administer and develop the nation to the extent that it was admired by other countries.

This success was achieved because the government had good planning and implemented its plans systematically, not according to its whims and fancies or in anger.

He said that Malaysia had emerged as the most advanced developing country with a strong economy and many economic experts who visited Malaysia were impressed with its development at a time some other countries' economies had shrunk.

He said that because the government had planned wisely and taken a stance not to depend on the developed countries to resolve its problems, Malaysia could now criticise any country, including the big powers.

"Now we disagree with efforts to attack Iraq...no developed country has opposed an attack on Iraq," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia intended to bring patients from Palestine to Malaysia for treatment as part of efforts to help fellow Muslims and on humanitarian grounds.

"We must be brave in the face of criticism because this is for humanity," he added.

He said Malaysia could afford do this but no many other countries were willing to help for the sake of humanity.

He also called on the people to do their best to acquire knowledge in

the various fields to improve themselves and the nation.

He said Islam taught its followers to acquire knowledge because with knowledge they could defend and develop their country.

He wanted the people to concentrate on mastering the English language because most of the knowledge books are written in English.

-- BERNAMA

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