

29 OCT 2003

Mahathir-Tribute

SABAHANS GRATEFUL TO DR M FOR POLITICAL STABILITY, DEVELOPMENT

KOTA KINABALU, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- Sabahans today expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his vast contributions in propelling the state to greater heights in terms of development and political stability.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman said as a mark of appreciation for the Prime Minister's contributions the Sabah Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties would ensure a thumping victory for the ruling coalition in the state election.

"The resounding victory for the BN is our special gift to Dr Mahathir who will retire on Friday.

"This is our way of returning the favour to a great leader of this country," he told reporters after appearing on the "Selamat Pagi Malaysia" talkshow programme.

"Dr Mahathir is leaving the scene at a time when the country is enjoying stability and the people living in unity," said Musa, who is also Sabah BN chief.

"We in Sabah do not forget to say thank you to Dr Mahathir for helping to modernise this state," he said.

On Umno's position in Sabah after Dr Mahathir's era, Musa, who is also State Umno Liaison Chairman, said the party would continue to be the backbone of the state government.

"Umno will continue to play an important role to develop Sabah to greater heights," he added.

In SEREMBAN, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad conveyed his sincere thanks and appreciation for the assistance, support and guidance he received from Dr Mahathir during his 22-year tenure as Prime Minister.

He said Dr Mahathir's contributions and sacrifices to the country and people would be remembered forever by Malaysians from all walks of life.

"It has been proven Dr Mahathir's leadership has propelled the country to achieve remarkable progress and development.

"Dr Mahathir has also brought about a change in the people's mindset to be more proactive and has placed Malaysia on the world map and as a role model marvelled by many countries, especially developing nations," he told reporters after chairing the weekly state executive council meeting.

Mohamed Isa said Malaysia enjoyed peace and stability under Dr Mahathir's dynamic leadership.

He also congratulated Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who would be sworn in as Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister on Friday.

In MELAKA, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Ali Rustam said the state government and the people wished to convey their deepest appreciation to Dr Mahathir for his assistance and guidance in developing the state to what it is today.

He said Dr Mahathir had made immense contributions to Melaka since he became Prime Minister in 1981 till now.

"Previously, Melaka was known as the 'sleepy hollow state' but now with the assistance of the Federal Government and Dr Mahathir himself, Melaka has developed at a feverish pace.

"Melaka is among the most rapidly developing state in the country now," he told reporters after chairing the state executive council meeting.

To honour Dr Mahathir's contributions to the state, all government departments in the state would hold a special gathering tomorrow morning

with various events to remember and reflect on Dr Mahathir's services to the nation.

In ALOR STAR, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain said the state government had offered a piece of land to Dr Mahathir in recognition of his services as Prime Minister and as a Kedahan but he had turned it down.

He said Dr Mahathir refused to accept the land not because he did not appreciate the state government's gesture but he wanted to pay if he wished to own land in Kedah.

"He (Dr Mahathir) said no need to give him land because Kedah is a poor state. If he wants land, he will buy from his own money," he told reporters after chairing the state executive council meeting.

He said the state government would host a function for Dr Mahathir in honour of his contributions to the country when he returns to Kedah after his retirement.

"We don't know when Dr Mahathir will come to Kedah (after his retirement) but the state government will welcome and honour him," he said.

In KANGAR, the Thai community in Malaysia expressed their gratitude to Dr Mahathir for boosting the integrity of the minority race during his era.

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The Malaysian Thais' Association President Senator Siw Chun said apart from being recognised as Bumiputeras, the Thais also have a representative in the Dewan Negara and in the Kangar Municipal Council.

She said the Thais no longer felt sidelined in a multi-racial country like Malaysia.

She hoped Abdullah, who would succeed Dr Mahathir, would continue to pursue the same policy.

-- BERNAMA

MNR AD TS