

14 JAN 2004

Mahathir-Election

DR M RENEWS PLEDGE TO HELP BN IN POLLS CAMPAIGN

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 14 (Bernama) -- Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight reiterated his promise to help campaign for the Barisan Nasional (BN) in the upcoming general election.

The former prime minister said he was prepared to go down to the ground to explain to the people on why they should elect the BN during the soon-to-be held general election.

"If invited, I am ready to meet the people to explain what is actually BN and why the people need to vote for the coalition. This is my promise.

When I promise, I will not renege it," he said when speaking at a "Jasamu

Dikenang" premier dinner in honour of him and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah

Mohd Ali, organised by BN.

Prior to his retirement as Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir had promised to help the BN in the election campaign, especially for Umno, although he

would not be defending his Kubang Pasu parliamentary seat in Kedah.

Dr Mahathir had said only in that way he could return the favour of his

colleagues in the BN who had cooperated and supported him to lead the BN

and the country for 22 years.

"I am returning my favour to the BN. If permitted, in certain places

where I can influence the people to vote for the BN, I will go down to the

grassroots.

"I will not decide to where I will go but if invited, God Willing, I

will not reject," he said.

Dr Mahathir resigned as Prime Minister and from all posts in Umno and

BN on Oct 31 last year.

Dr Mahathir, who asked not to heap praises on him for his contributions, said as a normal human being he was not free from making

mistakes during his tenure as Prime Minister.

"I am aware that I am an ordinary person. As an ordinary person, certainly I would have made many mistakes. While I was in government, I

believe many mistakes that I made had caused the country a lot of problems.

"I always remind myself of my weaknesses and the mistakes that I have done so that I don't feel forgiven when praised by anyone, this determines that my legs are always on earth and not on the clouds," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said BN leaders' preparedness to accept an opinion although they might not fully agree with it helped enhance the ruling coalition's position and the government.

"Generally, we accept, we abide by the leadership's decision although sometimes leaders make mistakes, sometimes leaders are adamant, don't want to listen to views of other components but this is not to the extent of splitting the party.

"But we eventually accept the views of the majority and also views that are sometimes forced upon us by leaders, only then we can act effectively," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he believed compromise and moderation among BN leaders would continue under Abdullah's leadership.

-- BERNAMA
SHI NM TOM