

# Polls co-operation with — Berjasa is ruled out

# Malay vote won't be split: Dr. M

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**KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad today ruled out co-operation with Berjasa in the general election after the party's decision yesterday not to join the National Front.**

He believed that the Berjasa decision to stay out of the Front would not necessarily split Ma-

lay votes and that the Front would be able to explain the situation to the electorate.

He added, however, that the Front-Berjasa coalition State Government in Kelantan would continue.

At Federal level, the two Berjasa Ministers — Public Enterprises Minister Berjasa leader Datuk Haji Mohamad Nasir and Local Government and Federal Territory Minister Haji Hassan Adli — would remain in the Cabinet.

The Berjasa central working committee at its meeting here last night voted 7-6 against joining the National Front.

Datuk Haji Mohamad Nasir, who chaired the meeting but abstained from voting, said later that the concept of co-operation between Berjasa and the Front as explained by Datuk Hussein Onn to Berjasa delegates at their Seri Taman meeting on Monday, did not apply any longer.

Berjasa deputy president Professor Ali Taib officially conveyed the central working committee's decision to the Deputy Prime Minister last night.

Speaking to reporters after a briefing at the Public Services Department here, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir expressed regret over the Berjasa decision but added:

"It's entirely their own decision. They have the right. We cannot force them to join. That's the way it is. They feel they will do better if they are on their own."

### One symbol

It is understood that one of the reasons why Berjasa refused to join

the Front was because its request to use its own symbol was rejected by the Front supreme council.

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said the Front supreme council had ruled that all component parties must contest under one symbol — the dacing — and it could not make exceptions.

Asked if dissatisfaction over allocation of seats was another reason for the Berjasa decision, he said: "We cannot make an offer before the party joins the Front."

As for the possibility of some kind of understanding between the Front and Berjasa in the general election despite the latter's decision to stay out of the Front, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir said there could not be any understanding as it would be contrary to the Front's principles.

### 'Difficult'

He said the latest development, despite being somewhat complicated, could also make things easier for the Front.

He explained that it had been difficult sometimes to persuade Umno members to vote for Berjasa candidates.

In the 1974 election, Umno found it difficult to persuade its members to vote for Pas candidates.

On the possibility of Berjasa joining the Front after the election, he said: "We will cross the bridge when we come to it."

Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir warned that disciplinary action would be taken against component party members who contest as independent candidates in the coming election.

Certain Front members had said that they would be more competitive and aggressive if their party was dissatisfied with the seat-allocation.

In PENANG, Front secretary-general Encik Ghafar Baba said before leaving for Kuala Lumpur that the Front would meet soon to discuss the Berjasa decision.

On Front co-operation with Berjasa in the Kelantan State Government, he said:

"The Kelantan Government will carry on as it is. If there are any changes, we will consider them after the general election because we do not have the time now."

He added that the Front decision would depend on whether Berjasa wished to remain a partner in the State Government.