

Why they fell like 'nine pins' — Dr M

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reflected their vision and aspirations for the nation.

attributed the Barisan Nasional's grand haul to a new awareness and understanding among the electorate of what a Barisan government stands for, and to the cooperation among the 11 component parties.

The fall of DAP candidates like "nine pins," he said, meant that the people were tired and were no longer willing to be used as a sacrifice just for the sake of having an Opposition.

"We have toppled the chauvinists among them, the narrow-minded people the country can ill-afford."

To examine

Datuk Musa Hitam, who was with the Prime Minister at a live television interview and subsequent Press conference, said the victory also meant that the people were no longer attracted by issues based on emotions and communal sentiments.

A winning Barisan promise, he added, was the catch phrase, "clean, efficient, trustworthy" which had captured the people's imagination as it

The Prime Minister said he would form his Cabinet as soon as possible; the administration's first priority would be to examine government machinery to look for weaknesses and to seek new approaches "to fulfil our determination towards a clean, efficient and trustworthy government."

With the majority gained, his administration should be able to carry out its programmes "without any fear or reservation that we would be weakened in the process."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir admitted that he had not expected the party to do as well as its 1978 performance. He cited the problems between component parties and within parties too and also the 50 per cent new faces that made up the Barisan line-up of candidates who were not capable of using the old party machinery fully.

But he said he was pleased that the Barisan machinery had run "very efficiently" and that the component parties had worked together under the Barisan banner, including the MCA and the

Gerakan.

There had been no separate campaigns, he said in a reference to the bitter rivalry between the two parties in 1978.

Asked if he felt the resounding victory, especially in urban areas that had been DAP strongholds, reflected a new maturity among the voters, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said it meant that the new generation of voters was not easily deluded by false promises and tricks.

"What we intend to do must have had some influence on the voters."

Asked which result gave him the most satisfaction — besides his own victory — he said what was more satisfying was to see constituencies that were supposed to be Opposition strongholds fall to the Barisan like nine pins.

On Encik Anwar Ibrahim's thumping victory in Permatang Pauh, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said it meant that he (Anwar) had chosen the right party and "I've chosen the right candidate for Permatang Pauh.

"The chicken which has just grown its feathers apparently already has strong ones."