

# Mahathir happy seats issue (P) settled amicably

NST 24 JUL 1986

ALOR STAR, Wed. —

The Prime Minister is happy that the Barisan Nasional component parties are generally satisfied with the seats allocated to them.

There were some problems initially, but they had been amicably settled without jeopardising unity within the coalition. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

This was possible because the parties were aware of the need to compromise in the interest of the nation.

Dr Mahathir felt that the Barisan would perform well in the elections given this cohesion and unity.

"Thank God we have managed to solve the question of allocation of seats among the various parties without much

## By BALAN MOSES

difficulty," he told a gathering of more than 1,000 party workers before announcing the State Barisan Nasional candidates for parliamentary constituencies at Bangunan Tunku.

"This has been achieved because we all believe in the Barisan Nasional and the basis of its struggles."

Dr Mahathir said the task of allocating seats was always difficult as there were 13 parties in the coalition "and not three as in the days of the Alliance".

"Sometimes, there might arise a situation where a candidate from one race is unacceptable to others in an area. But Barisan Nasional members should, nevertheless, support the candidate."

He said there was bound to be disappointment in the choice of candidates.

On Berjaya's decision to leave the Barisan, he said it would not affect the performance of the coalition in the elections.

He also said Berjaya president Datuk Wan Hashim bin Wan Ahmad had assured him that the party would remain in the coalition and support it in the elections.

"I believe he and his supporters will keep their word."

Stressing the need for the Barisan Nasional to win a two-third majority of parliamentary seats, he said this was necessary so that the Government could "act bravely in improving the economy, among other things".

He said a marginal victory would not be enough as the Opposition would then try to topple the Barisan by "buying over" candidates.

## Candidates

Dr Mahathir said one of the primary reasons for calling an early election was to enable the Government to proceed with the task of ruling the country without having to divert its attention to other matters.

"Thus, I called for the election to settle once and for all who will be the Government."

On the opposition front, he said it would fail "as we will be able to see them fighting among themselves for the next 10 days".

He later addressed Barisan Nasional workers for his parliamentary constituency of Kubang Pasu in Jitra.