

Party 'first, says PM on selection of candidates

By K. □ ALA AND
SUDHEERAN CHANDRAN

JELEBU, Sat. — The party is supreme and members must take this into consideration when facing issues like the selection of candidates for the coming general election, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad reminded Umno members today.

The Prime Minister and Umno president said the party must be placed above sectional and individual interests.

Members should not be taken in by the personality of candidates but go all out for a big win for the Barisan Nasional, he told members of Jelcibu Umno — the constituency of Semangat 46 deputy president Datuk Rais Yatim who won the seat on a Umno ticket in the 1986 general election.

A narrow victory is not enough, he

“We need a two-third majority to govern effectively.

“Umno can win all the seats in the coming general election but party members must give total commitment in a spirit of togetherness to achieve this.”

Dr Mahathir, who is on a tour of several States, said there was bound to be dissatisfaction among certain quarters in the selection of candidates.

But once decisions are made, all members must abide by them for leaders are dispensable but not the party.

He cautioned Umno members to beware of the Opposition, especially Semangat 46 which would be looking out for dissatisfied members.

“They will go around offering Ministerial and other posts to these people to stand against the BN,” he said, adding in lighter vein that there would be numerous Cabinet Minis-

ters going by the offers.

“As long as there is no split caused by frustrated members, Umno can win all the seats.”

He said there was no need for a candidate to be frustrated if he was dropped.

“The candidate must accept it and support others selected to replace them without question.

“The elections are not to promote individuals but to form a Government which would look after the interests of all the people.

“The candidates who are dropped must remember that those replacing them had supported and worked hard for their victory before.

Dr Mahathir urged party members to ignore baseless allegations by the Semangat 46 leaders, saying “nobody can deny that the BN has brought so much progress and development for the people”.