

Kit Siang ignored people's view: PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang is forcing voters in Penang to choose him.

The Prime Minister said Mr Lim had not taken the people's views into consideration in challenging Chief Minister Dr Lim Chong Eu for the Padang Kota state seat.

"Mr Lim is forcing the people to make a choice which they did not like to make.

"The people elected him before because they wanted some opposition, but now he is hurting them by contesting against Dr Lim.

"Mr Lim should withdraw his candidacy," Dr Mahathir said after launching the Barisan Nasional manifesto at Umno headquarters.

He said the Opposition's claim that Dr Lim was a reluctant candidate only reflected their ignorance about the Chief Minister.

He said Dr Lim would

not do anything he did not like.

However, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan welcomed the opposition challenge.

"Without a contest, the people would lose their rights," he said.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said the DAP challenge in Penang was "typical of Mr Lim."

"He always wanted things his way. He doesn't care about the wishes of the people."

Dr Lim Keng Yaik said Mr Lim was contesting Padang Kota "not for the sake of Penang's future" but for his own ends.

He was confident the people of Penang would vote for continuity.

The Gerakan president said the party would be able to win all the nine parliamentary seats it was contesting.

In Penang, Mr Lim Kit Siang described his chances of toppling Dr

Lim Chong Eu as "difficult."

Speaking at a ceramah at the Penang Chinese Town Hall last night, he said: "I don't dare say I feel confident. I know it is going to be very difficult."

On the DAP's five other leaders — Karpal Singh (Sungai Pinang), Gooi Hock Seng (Tanjung Bungah), Teoh Teik Huat (Paya Terubong), Lim Hock Seng (Mak Mandin) and Chian Heng Kai (Bukit Tengah) — Mr Lim said the decision to put them in these constituencies was made by the party with their agreement.

"Each one had the option of not accepting (the challenge)," he said.

"The DAP is placing its future in the hands of Penangites. We are prepared to be wiped out in Penang, and even in Malaysia," he said.

Mr Lim said the move to pit DAP leaders against MCA and Gerakan leaders was not to create

problems for the people in making a choice.

He said that even if the DAP candidates were voted in, there was no guarantee they would be allowed to attend the State Assembly as he and Mr Karpal Singh had been suspended indefinitely.

Meanwhile, Dr Lim Chong Eu said Penangites understood the need for a state government that could work closely with the Federal Government.

He said he was confident that the people would reject *Tanjung 2*.

Dr Lim said that even if he were defeated, the Barisan was "so effective" it could carry on leading Penang.