

Dr. M feels upbeat about BN chances

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By AHIRUDIN ATTAN

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad began his campaign in the peninsula yesterday feeling upbeat about the Barisan Nasional's chances in this weekend's general election.

After meeting supporters in Seremban and Kajang, the BN chairman and Umno president told reporters that he is confident of another thumping victory for the ruling coalition.

He said the BN is in a very strong position because its members are united and because the people are supportive. Even voters in the urban areas, he said, have become more appreciative of the Government's development programmes and more wary of the Opposition's vote-fishing tactics.

"And there is no issue which the Opposition can use against us. All the programmes carried out by the Gov-

ernment have achieved resounding success."

Following the dissolution of Parliament on October 5, the Prime Minister began his election campaign with visits to Labuan, Sabah and Sarawak over the weekend. He is scheduled to cover all the states in the peninsula in the next four days. He last met with the people in every state in the peninsula during a two-leg tour begun about two months ago.

In Kajang yesterday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir told supporters that he was initially worried over the reaction of leaders who were not renominated for this year's election.

"It seems that my fear was unfounded. Today, I found out that members of the BN coalition possess what they should possess — support for the party even when they are not contesting in the election."

He made special mention of the MIC's Datuk S. Subramaniam and Datuk K. Pathmanaban who, despite being excluded from the party's nomination

Cont'd Back Page, Col. 6

PM feels upbeat about BN chances

FROM PAGE ONE

BT 16 OCT 1990

list, were seen to be "helping out the candidates who had been nominated to replace them". Such a spirit, he added, exists only in the BN and gives him confidence that the coalition will repeat its past victories over the Opposition.

Speaking to reporters, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said urbanites are beginning to be more receptive to the development programmes carried out by the BN Government.

"It is clear that they are more appreciative than before of what the Government has been doing for the people."

The Prime Minister also ex-

pressed confidence in the BN's chances in states which the Opposition claims as their strongholds, such as Penang and Kelantan.

Opening a secondary school in Bangi later, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir told supporters that all development and economic programmes implemented by the Government under the BN have shown positive results.

He cited the success of, among other things, the national car, the Government's privatization policy, the construction of the Penang Bridge, various infrastructure projects, the country's Look East Policy and the Visit Malaysia Year.

He said these projects not only benefit the industries concerned but also spilled over to petty traders and people in the other economic spheres.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said this achievement is not a fluke, as alleged by leaders of the Opposition. "The Government and the people worked hard for this success. We're ranked fifth among the developing nations not because our luck is better than other countries', but because we have the vision to carry out the various projects that benefit the people and, more importantly, we have the support of the people."