

BN can retain two-thirds majority: Dr M

By Paul Gabriel

ALOR STAR, Sat. — The Barisan Nasional has a good chance of retaining its two-thirds majority, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister and Barisan chairman said the coalition remained hopeful as it had done its very best.

He said he had toured the country several times and the "assessment" was that the Barisan could achieve the two-thirds majority despite the last-minute PBS pullout.

However, Dr Mahathir admitted his concern over Kelantan, adding that the Barisan was faced with difficulty there because



of "extraordinary factors."

"If the contest is purely between the Barisan and the opposition, we would win. But because of these extraordinary factors, we have some problems. God willing, we can win," he told newsmen at the Kubang Pasu District Officer's home in Jitra.

Asked what these "factors" were, he replied: "Never mind, there's no

need to ask."

Dr Mahathir, who had earlier handed out financial aid to 24 Kubang Pasu fire and storm victims, said the Barisan Government would be able to resolve all problems and continue the nation's development if it was returned with a big majority.

"There will be no problems if we are returned with a big majority. But if

we win with a majority of one or two (seats), surely it will be difficult."

On Semangat 46's co-operation with the PBS, Dr Mahathir said this had angered many PAS members who had decided to join Umno.

"And some PAS members who have not decided to join or support have stated that they would not come out and vote," he said.

Asked whether the Barisan would initiate moves to reconcile all Ma-

lay parties if it won with a strong majority, Dr Mahathir said: "This is not new. We have been saying that we should not be divided. There is no use having PAS and Semangat. So we are always working towards ensuring that all Malays have only one party, Umno."

On Sabah, Dr Mahathir felt that all problems could be resolved in the "usual way."

He said it was only the Barisan would initiate the entire party, which

did not have the "Malaysian spirit."

He said any move to get Sabah out of Malaysia would not succeed, pointing out that an attempt to get Kelantan out had failed in the past.

"We will try to explain to all Sabahans the benefits of remaining in Malaysia, and to wipe off the hatred against Malaysia that Pairin (Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan) has implanted in their hearts," he said.