

PM: Our victory very good despite setback

MS 23 OCT 1990

By K.H. Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the victory of the Barisan Nasional was very good considering the early setback posed by the PBS.

He said if the PBS had not withdrawn from the BN and if the parochial factor had been absent, the coalition would have performed better than it did in the 1986 general election.

Dr Mahathir, who is the BN chairman, was speaking at a Press conference at the Putra World Trade Centre soon after the BN obtained two-thirds of the seats in Parliament, after most of the seats had been declared early this morning.

Dr Mahathir also said the BN lost all 39 State and 13 parliamentary seats in Kelantan because of parochialism.

He said Federal-State relations in Kelantan would certainly be different, especially since Government officers had played an important role in the defeat of the BN.

"We are indeed sad that this happened because this is against the democratic principle of a neutral civil service which implements policies determined by the Government of the day."

Replying to a question, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional did not lose in constituencies

because of its policies.

He said this was clear in the States, with the exception of Sabah and Kelantan, where the people supported its policies.

These policies, he said, would be continued as promised.

On the role of Semangat 46 in the Opposition, Dr Mahathir said its role was small because the DAP and PBS held the highest number of seats respectively.

"So, Semangat 46 has to follow from behind."

Earlier, when interviewed over television, he said: "I admit I have no experience in dealing with Opposition State Governments."

"I will seek advice from those who have had experience in relations with State Governments which were in the Opposition."

On the Pas-Semangat co-operation in the new Kelantan Government, he said he would have to wait and see whether they could work together.

On Sabah, which was also in the Opposition following the defection of the ruling PBS State Government, he said the Federal Government had nothing against the people of Sabah.

"The PBS believed that it would be joining the Government when it aligned itself with Semangat 46."

★ PLEASE TURN TO P2, COL 8

Sabah people not to blame

MS 23 OCT 1990

★ FROM PAGE ONE

"However, we will not punish the people of Sabah. In my opinion, the people of Sabah have been exposed to propaganda to the extent that they are anti-Government."

"This is very sad, for there is no reason for the Sabah people to be against the Federal Government."

"We have actually given them much help. But because the Pairin Government is so greedy, it has finished all the sources of wealth, that is timber, so now it is looking for other

sources of wealth.

"This is why they are asking for more oil royalties ... not that Sabah needs it but because they wanted more money for propaganda to ensure the people will continue supporting them."

The PBS had sought an increase in oil royalties, among other things, in its long-standing feud with the Federal Government.

Dr Mahathir said despite losing 14 parliamentary seats in Sabah and 13 in Kelantan, the BN was able to secure a two-thirds majority.

On Semangat 46, he said it was a splinter party with not many followers.

He said it was only in Kelantan that it had been successful in getting its followers to work for Pas victories.

Elsewhere, Semangat had no followers, he added, and Pas seemed to be not so enthusiastic in supporting the party.

"In my constituency, for example, Pas did not have booths to serve voters to help Semangat 46 candidates"