

DR M: BN VICTORY REFLECTS PEOPLE'S SUPPORT

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The Barisan Nasional victory in the Prai by-election has reaffirmed the people's support for the coalition, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said that in a by-election, it was usually the opposition which managed to win because it was felt that the outcome would not lead to a change of government.

"But this time, the opposition lost. In my opinion, this is because the DAP had cried wolf too many times," the Prime Minister told newsmen after opening the MCA general assembly here.

Dr Mahathir said the coalition had expected to win the by-election by only about 600-odd votes but it had secured a 862-vote majority.

He said DAP secretary-general Lim Siang should drop his Tanjung Three (project) to capture the Penang Government and that the party leader should also quit.

Asked whether the defeat meant that the project would fail, Dr Mahathir replied: "I think the people had never supported the first, second or third project, the 10th project will not be accepted either unless the DAP stop its dirty tactics."

Dr Mahathir said the DAP had kept alleging that the Government was corrupt to the point that

the people no longer believed in its claim.

"It has no capital anymore, that is why it keeps repeating the same thing. I think the people are bored with the DAP's tactics," he said.

The DAP, he said, had also used the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill 1991 as an issue.

Dr Mahathir said the party could only see the negative side of the Bill and not the positive side of it.

The Bill would provide opportunities to the poor to own land, he said, adding that the DAP was only championing the cause of landowners without bothering about the landless.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said the Barisan Nasional supreme council would meet tomorrow to discuss the applications by several political parties to join the coalition.

"According to the party tradition, all Barisan component parties must unanimously agree to the application before the party can be accepted," he said.

The applications include a newly set-up Malay-based party from Terengganu and Permas, he added.

As to whether the supreme council would discuss the question of a snap election in Sarawak and its possible dates, Dr Mahathir said the matter was up to the ruling Sarawak Barisan party.