

# BARISAN TO ADOPT A NEW BATTLE CRY: PM

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By Paul Gabriel

ALOR STAR, Tues. — The Barisan Nasional campaign for the two Kelantan by-elections on Aug 24 will centre on "the need for an opposition in the state," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said such a battle cry was necessary because Kelantan was the only state without an opposition.

He said the possibility of wrong-doings were very great with no opposition, adding that the Federal Government and other states had always to contend with opposition parties.

"The situation in Kelantan is truly unhealthy. However nice one can be, he is bound to commit wrong-doings if left unchecked," Dr Mahathir told newsmen after attending the Sultan Abdul Hamid College's speech and prize-giving day.

Dr Mahathir said the by-elections were vital not only because it provided the Barisan an opportunity to "watch over" the Kelantan Government, but also due to the "climate of fear gripping Semangat 46 and PAS Assemblymen (in Kelantan)."

"As it is, they (Semangat and PAS Assemblymen) are in no position to say or do anything against the state leadership.

"If they do, they'll be expelled from the party and lose their assemblymen's posts ... so they will never raise a hue no

matter what the state does," Dr Mahathir added.

Asked whether the reshuffling of the Kelantan Umno after the October general election would have a "positive effect" on the party's chances in the by-elections, he said he did not know as the period was too brief.

"But we will get an idea from the by-elections," added Dr Mahathir, who took over as Kelantan Umno chief after the general election.

He also said Umno had decided on the principles upon which the candidates would be picked.

"But we haven't decided on the candidates. We will announce their names later," he said.

To a question whether Haji Wan Mohamad Najib (Limbongan) and Haji Nordin Salleh (Sungai Pinang), who crossed over to Umno from Semangat, would be re-contesting, Dr Mahathir replied that Umno was "not greedy."

On claims by observers that the Barisan stood a better chance if the two incumbents were fielded due to their comfortable wins last year, he said: "Maybe they will retain some support but there will surely be those from PAS who will also turn against them."

Dr Mahathir said the coalition was aware of the fact that the majority of Kelantan folk were "not at ease with Umno."

He said he was confident that the Kelantan people would review their stand someday.