

# Polls win 'indication of general

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LANGKAWI, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said the Barisan Nasional's victory in the Shahbandar Raya by-election reflects the support of the people and serves as an indication of the outcome of the coming general election.

"We hope in the general election, what (Lim) Kit Siang says will become a reality."

The DAP secretary-general said at the party's national leadership congress in Kuala Lumpur last month that the DAP would fare badly in the general election.

Dr Mahathir said the Op-

position would come under tremendous pressure in the general election.

"That is why the Opposition is scared to contest in the Shahbandar Raya seat but they fielded their proxy to test the water to find out whether its cold or hot.

"I guess now the water is hot and boiling ... they (Opposition) should not simply field candidates in seats which they have no chance of winning," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this to reporters when asked for his comments on the Barisan's thumping win in the Shahbandar Raya by-election where S.S. Rajagopal se-

cured 13,909 votes to defeat independents Subari Saman and M. Pu Palan Muthusamy by an overwhelming majority of 10,829 votes.

The Prime Minister was speaking to reporters at the Langkawi International Airport at the end of a day-long private visit to the island.

Dr Mahathir congratulated the hardworking Barisan workers and said their hard work had been rewarded with a resounding victory.

Asked whether the indication from the by-election would inspire the Government to call for an early general election, Dr Ma-

hathir said: "The obvious indication is December next year because we could not go further than that."

On BN's preparations for the election, Dr Mahathir said the coalition was ever ready for it.

"That is why when there is a by-election, nobody is brave enough (to contest). Our machinery is ready for the election."

In Shah Alam, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim congratulated Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib on the victory.

Anwar, who is Umno dep-

uty president, said the victory of Rajagopal, was due to Muhammad's leadership and the strong support of the people as well as the co-operation given by BN component parties.

He said this when launching World Consumers' Day organised by the Umno consumers bureau.

Muhammad attributed the victory to the intense 10-day campaigning where the coalition's representatives managed to address the issues highlighted by the Opposition.

He said the victory was another feather in the cap for the coalition and indicat-

## election outcome'

ed the people's continued confidence in the Government led by Dr Mahathir.

The majority scored this time was astounding although the major Opposition parties decided not to field any candidates leaving two independent candidates in the fray.

Muhammad said the State Government would fulfill its promises made during the campaign and hoped the people would support the Barisan in the forthcoming general election.

The Menteri Besar said he had directed Rajagopal to play his role by getting closer to the constituents and

identifying their problems.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu who thanked the constituents for ensuring a bigger BN majority said Rajagopal would carry out his work of servicing the people and resolving their problems.

He said if Rajagopal did not carry out his responsibilities and duties as a State Assemblyman and serve the people, then he would not be nominated for the coming general election.

In Johor Baru, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said the Barisan victory was expected and that it showed the people

had made the right choice.

The victory also showed that the people had made the choice in the interest of stability, progress and prosperity, he told reporters after the convocation of Kolej Selatan.

In Kuala Lumpur, Opposition leader Lim Kit Siang described the by-election as a setback for the Barisan as voter turnout was only 48.25 per cent and was a reflection of no confidence in the MIC.

He claimed that the public was still not satisfied with the MIC in view of the many scandals the party was embroiled in.