

Dr Mahathir Mohamad

Kelantan Umno set to enter polls with new vigour

By Ahmad A. Talib,
Badrul Hisham
Mahzan and
Manisah Ismail

KOTA BARU, Wed. — Umno has consolidated its position and strength in Kelantan and this will lead the party to face the general election with fresh confidence, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the Kelantan Umno had seen the return of many members who have left the party to join the Parti Melayu Semangat 46.

"Even some Pas members have left their party to join Umno," said the Umno president at a Press conference after chairing the Kelantan Umno liaison committee meeting here.

He said the people of Kelantan might have changed their feelings about the present ruling party. This is seen in recent years as gradually many Pas and S46 members have joined Umno.

Asked whether the Mohamad Sabu case would have any bearing on the outcome of the election, Dr Mahathir said he was not sure whether he could discuss the issue as the case was in the Syariah Court.

Asked to comment on Mohamad's decision to resign from all party positions, Dr Mahathir said: "Well, it is his decision."

Pas president Fadzil Noor had announced, in a statement today, that the Pas Central Executive Committee — which met in Kuala Lumpur last night — had decided to accept Mohamad's offer to relinquish all his posts in the party.

Dr Mahathir said the meeting also reviewed the preparation of the Umno machinery in Kelantan.

He said the party machinery was instructed to be ready for hard work in the election.

Asked what was the poll prospect of the Barisan Nasional in Kelantan, Dr Mahathir said they had some chance in the State. "In the 1990 election, we lost some seats marginally. We hope that with the consolidation within Umno, we may achieve some results."

Asked whether the BN in Kelantan would adopt a different manifesto, Dr Mahathir said as a rule the BN would have a national manifesto, but at the State level, there might be a supplementary manifesto.

Asked to elaborate on the supplementary manifesto, Dr Mahathir said the document might look into specific issues pertaining to the State.

On whether the BN had agreed on the candidates in Kelantan, Dr Mahathir said that the matter had been discussed at the meeting. "We had agreed on the general principle of candidates to be selected."

Asked to elaborate on the principle, the Prime Minister said the candidates to be chosen must have a chance of winning and they should also possess a clean track record.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir, who

PLEASE TURN TO
PAGE 2, COL 1

Dr Mahathir: Time for change near

□ FROM PAGE ONE

arrived here this afternoon, was greeted at the Sultan Ismail Petra airport in Pengkalen Chapa by State Umno deputy liaison chief Datuk Annuar Musa and State Umno Information chief Datuk Ibrahim Ali. Also present were Umno divisional leaders and leaders from other BN component parties.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

From the airport, he was driven to the State Umno building where he chaired the State Umno liaison meeting. A separate programme was arranged for Dr Siti Hasmah at the Kem Desa Pahlawan in Kok

Lanas, near here.

Later, speaking at a large gathering at the Sekolah Menengah Kadok, about 16kms from here, Dr Mahathir said that the time for change in Kelantan was near.

He said the people in Kelantan had a responsibility to decide for themselves the kind of government they wanted with the election.

He said it was clear that the present Government had not been able to deliver the many promises it made in 1990.

"There is no evidence to show that the promises made by the Pas-led State Government has been kept. It was easy for them to make promises but now they are trapped by these very prom-

ises."

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by his wife, broke fast with those present at the school compound.

Police said close to 10,000 people attended the event. Tents were erected in the compound and mats were laid out to enable the people to break fast with the Prime Minister. Women and children sat down cross-legged on the floor at the occasion.

Dr Mahathir said Umno members should encourage their friends who were in opposition parties to return to Umno.

He said: "Get them to return to us. We will forgive them. We are prepared to accept them."

The Prime Minister re-

minded the people to be wary of elements which appeared to be using religion to further their political interests.

This could lead to fanaticism which may destroy society in the long run.

He said he was concerned at the attempt by the Opposition to defend their leaders even though they had done wrong. This kind of fanatical belief was not healthy for the country, he added.

Also present at the function were Annuar Musa, Ibrahim Ali, Deputy Finance Minister Senator Datuk Mustafa Mohamed and other State Umno leaders.

Dr Mahathir and his wife left for Kuala Lumpur tonight.