

Support in Kelantan getting stronger

By K.P. Waran and Badrul Hisham

KOTA BARU, Wed. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said there had been a swing in support for the Barisan Nasional in Kelantan, making it possible for the national coalition to form the next Government in the State.

The Prime Minister said Umno, which was divided in Kelantan during the 1990 general election, had become united and the Chinese in the State had also come to realise the benefit of voting the BN to power.

"I would say that the support for the BN is stronger than even in 1986 when we formed the State Government," he told reporters after chairing consecutive meetings of the Kelantan Barisan Nasional and the State Umno today.

He said the voters realised that the BN delivered whatever promises it made and wanted to serve the people.

He said the BN meeting endorsed the list of candidates for the State which would be made public when the contestants had been informed. He added that some of the candidates may have to resign from their present positions in the civil service and as senators to contest.

He said some of the candidates who had contested in 1990 would make way for new faces and there would be changes in the constituencies for some. He described the candidates as being qualified, service-oriented and proficient in religious matters.

During the meeting, Dr Mahathir who is BN chairman, said he had stressed the need for all the component parties to work together to ensure victory for the national coalition's candidates.

He said the supplementary manifesto for Kelantan was being finalised and would be unveiled in the next few days.

When asked whether the Government planned to abolish more taxes if it came to power, he said, the Government through its 1995 Budget had already reduced or abolished taxes on 2,600 items to benefit the people.

"No Government can function without collecting taxes and it is Pas and the other Opposition parties which make false promises to do away with taxes. They made similar promises during the 1990 election but after coming to power in Kelantan did nothing.

"We do not bait the voters with promises that we cannot fulfil," he said.