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Mahathir-Byelection

RESULT SHOWS VOTERS NOT HAPPY WITH COURT DECISION, SAYS PM

KUANTAN, March 17 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said Barisan Nasional's victory with an increased majority in the Bukit Begunan by-election showed that the voters are not too happy with the court decision to nullify the previous election result.

"It is the verdict of the people not only regarding the candidate but also against the judgement," the Prime Minister said.

He acknowledged that the court had the final say but felt that the grounds for the decision was not quite right as the judge himself had stated that the winning candidate and his representative were not involved in vote-buying.

"What was found was that money changed hands...we don't know whether it was for that candidate or for the opposing candidate," he told a news conference after opening Malaysia Electric Corporation Bhd (MEC) and MEC City in Gambang near here.

The Election Court in Kuching had on Feb 13 ruled that the result of Sarawak state election for the Bukit Begunan seat was null and void as there were elements of bribery.

The application to nullify the result was filed by independent candidate Donald anak Lawan who lost to BN's Mong anak Dagang.

Mong recontested in the by-election held over the weekend and was returned with a bigger majority of 4,615 votes against independent candidate Jack anak Bujang.

Dr Mahathir said he feared the possibility of people deliberately handing over money to a certain candidate and getting it photographed and use it as evidence of corruption.

"If this happens, even I cannot win," he said.

In KUALA LUMPUR, Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak president Datuk Leo Moggie said the by-election victory showed that the people in Bukit Begunan supported the politics of development practised by BN.

Moggie was happy that although there was a drop in the voter turnout, the majority obtained by the BN candidate was bigger.

Moggie, who is the Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts, was speaking to reporters after launching the 10th anniversary celebration of the privatisation of the country's telecommunication industry. --

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