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Line-up carefully selected

Abdul Razak Ahmad
ALOR STAR, Sat. – Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today advised Barisan Nasional leaders who had been dropped as candidates to support those replacing them.

 Speaking over Radio Alor Star, the Prime Minister said the BN line-up was carefuly selected to ensure an injection of new ideas.

 He said although many senior politicians who were not chosen were still capable and energetic, "we must be willing to sacrifice".

 "Although some of the candidates may not be well-known, give them support, because they were also taken from branch and divisional levels."

 He said the BN had deliberated very carefully on the selection of its candidates.

 "There's no one candidate who is both popular and capable (in equal measures)."

 He also advised voters to choose carefully.

 "Voters must choose rationally as the election is to form a Government and not to vent anger at anyone."

 Asked later by reporters about his challenger who unexpectedly replaced Datuk Harun Din, Dr Mahathir said: "I thought that Harun was going to run against me, but he has decided not to. I don't know for what reason."

 "Firstly, he (Subky) is not from here, he's from Perak. I don't know what his contributions are to this place, and whether he knows the problems of locals."

 "I've been here long. In 1995, I won with an over 17,000-vote majority. If I can get a similar majority, Alhamdulillah (thanks be to God). What's important is I win."

 He said the election would be decided based on the BN's proven track record and not on specific issues which the Opposition had tried to highlight.

 "Maybe, among the so-called intellectuals in Kuala Lumpur, these issues are important, but here they are interested in basic things," he said.

 Dr Mahathir added that voters in rural areas understood that this was an election to set up a Government to lead the country into the next millennium.

 He said the BN had the experience and track record. "In rural areas, voters are more interested in these issues."

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