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PM confident of two-thirds mark

Zubaidah Abu Bakar; Sharanjit Singh

JITRA, Sun. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is confident that the Barisan Nasional will retain its two-thirds majority and win in all states, even in Kelantan, where its chances are "50-50".

A strong government would be good for the country to enable development projects to be carried out, he said, adding that a weak one would engage in "too much debate and nothing is done".

"We have seen this happening in many countries where some government members cross over to the Opposition just to get advantage for themselves and not to do anything good for the country," he told a Press conference here at the end of a tour of his constituency, Kubang Pasu.

On his campaign in Kubang Pasu, where he faces Pas candidate Ahmad Subky Abdul Latif, Dr Mahathir said he felt good especially during his visit to a herbal medicine farm run by DXN Holdings Sdn Bhd in Bukit Wang where the reception was "very good".

"People lined the road leading to the farm and there were no Opposition posters in sight."

Dr Mahathir however said the Opposition posters and banners seen in some places did not mean that the Opposition would win.

"They have been putting up posters since the last two years but this does not guarantee that they would win."

To a question from a foreign journalist whether he would regard it as a failure if BN did not retain its two-thirds majority, Dr Mahathir replied that it would not be. "Anything above 50 (per cent) is not a failure... but of course we say we want two-thirds because it's good for the country."

Dr Mahathir, appealing to fence-sitters to come out and vote, said he was confident that they would be more active this time.

"This is because people like taxi drivers, buddhist associations, inter-religious associations and clubs have come out in open support of the BN."

On the split among Malays caused by Pas, Dr Mahathir said it was a challenge for the community as the Malays were already weak economically and academically.

This, he explained was because if the Malays were divided politically they would be left out of the mainstream of development.

On his campaign speeches which have centered on the Malay split, Dr Mahathir said this was because he found the faith of Muslims had been "adulterated or deviated" by Pas.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir said Pas had also attempted to use the new Putra Mosque in Putrajaya for its political gain.

There had been attempts by Pas to "infiltrate" and spread their outdated versions of Islam at the mosque but this was immediately checked.

He was speaking at the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the RM2 million Darul Aman Mosque at Bandar Darul Aman, near here.

Earlier, at a gathering of some 3,000 ex-servicemen at Institut Perguruan Darul Aman near here, Dr Mahathir thanked them for their contribution and sacrifices which the BN would always remember.

"I will ensure all those who win and even those who lose in the coming elections remember your (the ex-servicemen) contribution to society."

Dr Mahathir also reminded ex-servicemen to choose a government that was able to deliver benefits to the people.

"Remember we are not in this election to seek revenge or because we are

unhappy with others," he added.

During his visit to the herbal farm earlier, Dr Mahathir said he was happy such an export-based industry was located in Kubang Pasu.

He said the industry could help bring in foreign exchange for the country.

He also called on the management to conduct greater research and development and use scientific methods to increase productivity.

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