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Mahathir-Contest

STRAIGHT FIGHTS NO IMPACT ON BN, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

ALOR SETAR, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- The mostly straight fights seen in the country's 10th general election will have no impact on the Barisan Nasional (BN), said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The BN's victories all along have not been due to straight fights or three-or-four-cornered fights, he said after meeting armed forces personnel and their families at the Tok Jalai camp in Kepala Batas, near here today.

Dr Mahathir, the BN chairman, said the coalition won because of the trust the people have in the BN government's ability to govern and to bring development and progress to the country.

Even if all the votes for the opposition parties were added up, it would still be less than the total obtained by the BN, he said when asked to comment on the straight fights in 152 parliamentary and 367 state seats in the Nov 29 general election.

On DAP secretary general Lim Kit Siang's leaving the Tanjung state seat to instead contest the Bukit Bendera state seat in Pulau Pinang, he said Lim "ran away" from Tanjung as he did not want people to say he (Lim) wished to implement Tanjung IV, a DAP project aimed at capturing Pulau Pinang state.

"He went to Bukit Bendera maybe because he wanted to raise a bendera (flag)," Dr Mahathir quipped.

Answering a question, he said the Pulau Pinang Chief Minister's post would still go to Gerakan.

"If the performance is good, we will not change the leadership in the state. Even in the past when Gerakan obtained less seats (compared to Umno), we did not take over the post," he said.

On Perlis PAS commissioner Hashim Jasin's statement that PAS member Prof Dr Harun Din did not stand in the general election as his debt problem would have been exploited by Dr Mahathir, the Prime Minister said "yes, if he had made a mistake and we would have exposed it but I did not keep a file on his debts".

"I am not like Anwar who kept the country's files overseas," he added.

-- BERNAMA

JM MFJ THG