

15/07/2001

PM: Phantom voters not a factor

PUTRAJAYA, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has expressed his hope that Barisan Nasional candidate Datuk Yong Teck Lee will win the Likas by-election.

"We are hoping to win. We believe when we won before this was not because of the phantom voters. Even if there were any then, it was not as many as our winning votes."

Dr Mahathir said this when met after chairing the 2002 pre-budget dialogue session here today.

In the 1999 state election, Yong won the seat with a majority 4,962 votes, defeating Dr Chong Eng Leong (PBS), Datuk Haris Salleh from Parti Bersekutu and three others - Zulkifli Lajah (Setia), Yahya Kassim (PAS) dan Saudin Kadis (Bebas).

Asked to comment on the opposition's move to have a Keadilan candidate contesting when PBS is also running, Dr Mahathir said: "There is always a marriage of convenience among opposition parties when there is an election.

"When it is over, they would have a divorce of convenience. And then they marry again, divorce again. At the end, they are never strong. We in Barisan Nasional marry only once."

Meanwhile, Works Minister and MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said he would be visiting Likas to meet the people on July 18.

He said MIC had already sent its representatives to help with the BN machinery.

(END)