

30 JULY 2001

Mahathir-Likas

THANK YOU, SAYS PM TO LIKAS RESIDENTS

KOTA KINABALU, July 30 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today thanked the residents of Likas and the people in the state for their confidence and faith in the Barisan Nasional (BN).

Dr Mahathir, who is Barisan Nasional chairman, said that the victory of the BN candidate, Datuk Yong Teck Lee, president of the Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), and with a larger majority in the Likas state by-election on July 21 showed that the BN's win was not due to phantom voters.

"I say well done, congratulations and thank you to Likas voters and residents who have stood up for the BN. We will not forget their deeds.

"Congratulations to Datuk Yong Teck Lee for the landslide victory. I believe Datuk Yong will work harder not only in his constituency, not only for his party but also to all the BN members who have contributed to the BN's victory," he said at a thanksgiving ceremony here.

The function was attended by some 2,500 people from Likas and around the city to celebrate the BN's victory.

The prime minister also expressed appreciation for the BN election machinery comprising all BN component parties including its Youth and Wanita movements and Puteri Umno.

"It was a baptism of fire for the Puteri Umno and they have proven themselves.

"I hope efforts will be made to increase the membership of the "puteri" (princesses) not only in Umno but also in the other component parties so that this second echelon leaders will receive early training in politics because one day they will become the upper echelons," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the present upper echelon leaders would eventually make way for the new leaders but "do take over as leaders who are trained and have wisdom" so that they would be able to continue the struggles to make Malaysia a progressive and developed nation by 2020.

In the by-election, Yong obtained 9,758 votes, defeating three challengers, with a majority of 7,541 votes.

The by-election was held following the decision of the Election Court on June 8 to declare the result in the Likas constituency in the state election in 1999 null and void.

Yong won the seat in the state election with a majority of 4,962 votes.

Dr Mahathir said that the opposition should have accepted the people's decision to reject them in the state election.

"Let's not just accept the people's decision only when we win. The people have spoken, that they have been rejected, so accept the defeat," he said.

-- BERNAMA

JS RM