

PM pleased with big win

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat: The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he is very happy with the convincing victory by the Barisan Nasional which retained the Indera Kayangan state seat in Perlis in today's by-election with a bigger majority.

"I am very happy with the BN's thumping win. I congratulate all those who have campaigned so well to

ensure a victory for the BN.

"I also congratulate (Perlis menteri besar) Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim for redeeming BN's integrity," Mahathir said when interviewed by telephone over Radio and Television Malaysia's (RTM) TV1 after a televised announcement of the by-election results tonight.

Mahathir, who is BN chairman, also congratulated the BN candidate Oui Ah

Lan for defeating her Keadilan challenger, Khoo Yang Chong, by a majority of 2,592 votes.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, said BN's overwhelming victory shows the tremendous support for the ruling coalition among the people.

He said the people have proven that they want the BN to be in power and they

have used the ballot box to deliver their message.

"The people have shown that they stand solidly behind the government, including supporting its policies.

"This is the first by-election in the country after the Sept 11 attacks and the by-election results reflect the people's rejection of any form of extremism.

"The bigger majority

won by the BN and higher voter turnout also shows without any dispute the voters have rejected the opposition," Abdullah said at the Dewan Warisan after Oui was announced the victor.

He also said many other factors contributed to the BN's victory.

"The candidate Oui Ah Lan was a good choice, accepted by all component parties and the voters.

"The BN election machinery worked hard to ensure this victory and this reflects the rebuttal of the claims made by the Opposition against the ruling party.

"It is the hard work of the BN component parties that brought victory to the coalition," he added.

Abdullah also said with this defeat, the future of Keadilan is suspect.