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Accept seat allocations, Dr M tells Barisan component parties

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JOHOR BARU, Thurs. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today advised Barisan Nasional component parties to abide by the BN supreme council's decision on the number and location of seats that would be allocated to them in the next general election.

Dr Mahathir said component parties should readily accept decisions made by him, in his capacity as the coalition chairman, as a smart step to prevent internal disputes.

"I am making this appeal at this early stage so that when the time comes, every component party would abide by the decision.

"Let's say there are additional seats available (in the next general election), inevitably there will be parties which will not get everything they want ... but none will not get anything at all," he said.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Johor BN convention here, Dr Mahathir said component parties can rest assured that any decision made on the allocation of seats would be fair to all.

Addressing more than 10,000 component party members and supporters who were gathered in and around the Johor Baru City Council Indoor Stadium, Dr Mahathir urged them to avoid misunderstandings and instead work on ways to enhance co-operation.

He said component parties must overcome differences via discussions and strive to "give life" to the BN spirit of unity. Dr Mahathir reiterated that component parties should not be frustrated on the probable shift of constituencies.

"I'm saying this because eventually I'll be the one to decide and so I'm making an appeal at this early stage so that when I make the decision, there won't be any problem."

Acknowledging the Johor BN's clean record in ensuring a continued 100 per cent control of the State, Dr Mahathir said he hoped Johor would maintain the record in the next general election.

He warned those present to keep the opposition out of the State as they (the opposition) would only work towards disunity, among Malays and the non-Malays alike.

"Never allow Pas into Johor ... it's (full of) violence, lies and allegations. Its misrepresentation of the religion will smear the good name of the State.

"As such, take care of Johor so that it remains clean and safe," he said to thunderous applause from the floor.

Present were Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, PPP president Datuk M. Kayveas, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Tan Sri Musa Hitam.

Speaking at a Press conference later in the day after a working visit to the Johor Port in Pasir Gudang, Dr Mahathir called on BN members to get back to basics in winning the heart and minds of the people.

He said that the spirit of the Perikatan (alliance) (BN as it was known at its formation before Independence) should be revived at full force and harnessed.

"BN members must realise that they must work together to succeed.

"If we fight against each other over trivial matters then we can only be weak," he said.

