

'Najib to lead BN to a better poll showing'

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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad predicts a better showing for the Barisan Nasional (BN) in the coming general election owing to the leadership of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

He credited Najib for the BN's victory in yesterday's Hulu Selangor parliamentary by-election, saying the prime minister had managed to change the BN's image for the better.

Speaking to reporters after delivering his keynote address at a forum on 'A Strong China: Implications and Challenges' organised by National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Dr Mahathir said the BN had the ability to achieve a bigger victory in the 13th general election.

"In the last general election, the BN performed poorly not because of the BN per se but because the people didn't like certain individuals," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the BN, however, should conduct a post-mortem on why it lost the Chinese votes in the by-election.

Meanwhile, former prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi attributed the Hulu Selangor victory to Najib's people-first initiatives.

He said that through the programmes, the people were able to convince themselves that there would be more people-friendly initiatives from Najib in the years to come.

"We hope that the initiatives taken by Najib will continue and we will continue to support him," he told reporters in Putrajaya.

In the by-election, BN's P Kamalanathan polled 24,997 votes to defeat Zaid Ibrahim of PKR, who polled 23,272 votes, with a minority of 1,725 votes.

Abdullah said the victory would boost the spirit of party leaders, which he said augured well for the BN's quest to recapture Selangor, one of the five states it lost in the March 2008 general election.

- Bernama

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