

Mahathir: BN can recapture Kelantan with hard work

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ALOR STAR: The Barisan Nasional can regain control of Kelantan if it worked hard enough, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

However, he said he had no plans to go to the state and help with the campaign.

"Even here in Jerlun, I am not campaigning. I am just offering advice," he said after meeting Jerlun Barisan

Nasional volunteers on Friday night.

Dr Mahathir's youngest son, Datuk Mukhriz, is the Barisan candidate for the Jerlun parliamentary constituency.

Dr Mahathir said he had suppressed his sons' advancement in politics when he was in power.

"It was a principle I upheld because the prime minister's post is for the *rakyat*, not for my family," he

said, adding that he did not want people to say his sons had an advantage just because he was prime minister.

Dr Mahathir revealed that there had been proposals to nominate another son of his, Datuk Mokhzani, as candidate when he was at the helm, and for Mukhriz to replace him as Kubang Pasu Umno head when he retired.

"Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob (former Umno secretary-general, now Tun) made the proposal to ensure continuity. I told Khalil, I had not stepped down yet (at the time).

"As long as I was the Prime Minister, sorry-lah. I could not allow it," he added.

Dr Mahathir said he did not lobby to get Mukhriz a seat.

"The leadership decided to allow

him to contest here (in Jerlun). *Alhamdulillah* (Praise God)," he said.

Mukhriz said in jest that he had waited for a long time for his father to retire so that he could make his political debut.

"I was 39 when my father retired. I made it just in time to be an Umno Youth executive council member. I would be ineligible had I exceeded the age of 40" he said.