

PM: Two-third majority for BN is vital

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Malaysians would only be denying themselves a strong, stable and effective Government if they deny the Barisan Nasional a two-thirds majority, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"Only a strong and stable Government can guarantee peace and stability in the country," he said, when unveiling the Barisan's manifesto at the Tun Hussein Hall of the Putra World Trade Centre here.

The Prime Minister said a strong Government was one bold enough to act on what it believed was good for the people.

He said these actions might have been unpopular initially, but in the end the people had bene-

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fited from them.

Dr Mahathir dismissed as "baseless" the Opposition's contention that a strong Government was an oppressive Government.

"In the past 15 years, we have been liberal... that's why they can talk all they want and also be in the news. There are also many new publications, some critical of the Government.

"The fact that they can criticise, and sometimes make baseless accusations, shows that we are liberal," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Government had been patient with the Opposition although some of the accusations had tarnished its image and had adversely affected the economy.

He said only a strong

democratic majority Government could be effective in bringing progress.

Governments that held a simple majority were not effective as they were constantly trying to be popular and were thus unable to run the country well, he added.

Dr Mahathir said it was the Barisan's aim to preserve democracy in the country.

This was evident in the Government's decision to hold the general election at this time although its term had not expired.

He said he was sad that a certain party had tried to prevent the people from making a choice by resorting to legal action.

He added that although there was legal basis for such an allegation, it was important that the people be given a chance to choose the Government.

"Nobody should prevent this. I ask now... have we held on to democracy? The party that is trying to place obstacles before us certainly cannot be described as a democratic party."

Dr Mahathir also said that the presence of illegal immigrants in the country showed that foreigners knew that Malaysia was a land of peace and prosperity.

"Malaysians who have emigrated to countries such as Australia and Canada are no loss to us... they have made their decision. The people of this country know that they have a good life here.

"If we open our doors to immigrants now, we will surely be flooded with millions of people from everywhere. So, in the interests of the people, we are not doing that."

Dr Mahathir also said the Barisan Nasional had always struggled for development that was fair to all races.

He said the Barisan Nasional would ensure that no community was left behind in efforts to bring about more development in the country.