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PM hits out at reports in republic's papers

DATUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday Singaporeans, who were ruled by a single man for decades, are not in a position to talk about the need for a new leadership in Malaysia.

"Look at the team in Singapore. It hasn't changed very much, has it? Somebody has been PM longer than I have. And I don't have a son waiting to succeed me."

Singapore's Business Times newspaper said in an editorial on Saturday the Barisan Nasional had a "very low propensity for renewal".

It said winning the next general election would not seal Dr Mahathir's legacy and asked whether he would end-up hogging the stage longer than he should.

"I don't like to say these nasty things, but Singapore papers have a habit of passing nasty comments on us, but we keep quiet because we are very nice people," Dr Mahathir told a Press conference.

"But if they like to pick a quarrel with us, we are ready to have a quarrel with them. Our aim has never (been) to make comments about them. I have always downplayed differences with Singapore but sometimes one gets fed up with them."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was democratic and did not treat the foreign Press as badly as the republic.

"When the Opposition wins the election, they get arrested and charged."

Asked why he did not take legal action against the foreign media, Dr Mahathir said he believed in Press freedom.

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