

# ***No snap elections, says PM***

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## Opposition parties just 'obsessed' with the topic

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has brushed aside predictions by opposition leaders that there would be snap elections, saying the opposition had a fixation about elections.

"I can't understand the opposition. On one hand, they said this country is in a rotten state (and) that the economy is not doing well. If the economy is not doing well, why should the Government call for elections?" he asked.

Dr Mahathir said that governments normally called for an election at a time when they think they were going to win and the situation was conducive.

"Are they admitting the situation in the country is very good? The opposition has a fixation about elections. They think it is a plaything but we take elections very seriously. We don't just call for elections just because we are in a position to win," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Government faced all kinds of problems in 1999 but still

called for an election that year.

He was asked whether the Government planned to call for snap elections as predicted by some opposition leaders, including DAP chairman Lim Kit Siang.

Speaking to reporters at his Hari Raya open house on Sunday, Dr Mahathir said the economy was expected to be much better next year as the effects of the Sept 11 terrorists attacks start wearing off.

"There is already some recovery after the initial shock from Sept 11. People are now travelling again and I believe within one or two months, people will be travelling ... maybe not in the same numbers but sufficient to contribute to our economic growth," he said.

On his meeting with MCA Youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat recently, Dr Mahathir said Ong wanted to assure him that the problems faced by him (Ong) would be resolved amicably. "He does not want to make an issue out of it and I supported that."