

Gov't feels threatened, says Marina
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The Malaysian government feels threatened and is in a total state of panic and cannot think clearly, former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's eldest daughter Marina Mahathir said.

"They do feel threatened because they underestimated Bersih in 2007 and then in the 2008 general election they lost a lot of seats in Parliament and the state assemblies. And since then, they have been in a state of total panic and they can't think clearly at all. Now they are obsessed about how to win them back.

"You can win back people just by being nice. You can't win back people by being nasty. You can't say that those people who marched are hooligans. Maybe there was a handful, not all of them. The majority of them were professionals. The group was so diverse and it was really one Malaysia - young, rich, poor of every race, creed and every religion," she told Malaysiakini in an exclusive interview.

On July 9, Marina (right) participated in the Bersih 2.0 protest with her daughter and friends.

They started from near Jalan Pudu (Berjaya Times Square) and walked along Jalan Hang Jebat (formerly Davidson Road) in front of Stadium Negara towards the Olympics Council of Malaysia building where she encountered other friends.

She added that the people who marched were proud of the Bersih 2.0 movement. "I may not agree with your cause but you did a really good thing. We all became One Malaysia.

"Now, they are labeling us all sorts of names and let me tell you that they have lost all these votes. They may think they have lost them anyway, but let me tell you that there were a lot of people sitting on the fence and they have definitely gone to the other side. I see this clearly in the social media, especially email, twitters and blogs."

Marina explained that the July 9 March had dented the image of the government and would obviously affect the ruling party "from the all the stupid statements that they are making and have been made by the government officials".

"Imagine saying that they police fired into the Tung Shin Hospital to protect the patients. It does not make sense. Again, they cannot think clearly and it is having an effect on the government.

"The prime minister came to give a briefing to 6,000 people the following day after July 9. If you are constantly surrounded by people who are telling you that you are wonderful and you are right, you are not going to get a true picture of what happened. You have to go and talk to people with different, not mutual views.

"If they refuse to listen to the people, the government leaders are going to be cocooned in complacency. And they are going to react in absolutely the wrong way," Marina said.