

**Dr M says automatic dissolution doesn't affect BN**  
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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad is certain that the automatic dissolution of the Negri Sembilan state legislative assembly last night will not have any effect on the performance of the Barisan Nasional (BN) in the 13th general election.

"There must be a 'first time' for many things, we look how it is," he told the media after witnessing the agreement signing ceremony between PWN Excellence Sdn Bhd and Weststar Aviation Service Sdn Bhd in Langkawi today.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on the automatic dissolution of the Negri Sembilan state legislative assembly which was the first time in the country's political history and whether it would be good or bad for the BN.

"This morning I read the newspaper... there are reasons why Najib (Abdul Razak) did not dissolve the Parliament, there are several matters to be finalised," he said.

The former prime minister was also convinced that the general election for the state and federal levels could be held simultaneously.

Asked to comment on the smaller allocation for defence in the budget compared to the allocation by other Asean-member countries, Dr Mahathir said the government's priority was on education.

He was also convinced that the government would boost the country's defence capability especially the maritime defence citing the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) which now had more than 200 boats including those with a speed of 60 miles per hour.

"So far, we are capable of defending the country with the present assets but we must also make preparations from now for the possibility of a bigger offensive," he said.