

Be open to criticism or pay the price, Dr M tells gov't
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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has reminded leaders to be open to criticism or face the prospect of facing violence to the extent of the government being toppled.

Mahathir, in his latest blog posting today titled 'Mereka yang berkuasa' (those in power), warned leaders not to rely on their advisers solely, for fear they may use their clout to gain personal benefits.

The former premier said he preferred to listen to the views of uninvolved third parties.

He admitted that when he was the premier, he hardly listened to opposing views, especially from the opposition, as it was their nature to go against the government.

"However, I find the views aired by third parties are more genuine and worth serious consideration," said Mahathir, adding that there are not many people wanting to advise the authorities for fear of being scolded or being viewed negatively.

Quoting the English proverb "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely," he warned those who are not mindful of this, would see the nation heading towards corruption, progress being hindered, and even the country shattered.

Turn for the worse

He said people must be brave to advise the country's leaders because if they do not perform, things would take a turn for the worse, and the anger of the people would mount.

Mahathir said in Malaysia violence is not used as a means to topple the government with elections the preferred means to change the government.

"However, leaders should not be too confident the people would continue with the soft approach."

He also warned that the apple polishers surrounding leaders may lead them to abuse their power.

"If we want to hold power for a long time, do not abuse what is entrusted to us, although there are some who tell us that we are immune, that wrongdoings would not be exposed, and there are none brave enough to do anything," he said.