

**Dr M: Fear of Najib greater than during Japanese occupation**  
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During his two decades as prime minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad was accused of ruling the nation with an iron fist, jailing dissidents and political rivals as well as keeping the media, government agencies, and other institutions on a tight leash.

However, Mahathir claims that never in the history of Malaysia have its people been so afraid unlike now under the leadership of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

The Pakatan Harapan chairperson alleged that the fear is greater than what was experienced during the Japanese occupation.

“What do they fear? They fear Najib,” he said in a blog posting this evening.

“Civil servants are afraid to speak the truth for fear that Najib might dislike it and abuse them. They are afraid of losing their jobs. They are afraid of being demoted or transferred.

“They are afraid that when they retire, there would not be an opportunity to be a director in a government firm,” he added.

According to Mahathir, businesspersons are afraid that something would be done to them if they are seen to be close to the opposition or its leaders.

“Some have been warned to steer clear of certain individuals who are considered enemies of the government,” he claimed.

**Taxman cometh**

The former premier alleged that those who do not comply failed to get bank loans, and if loans are given, they are bombarded with all sorts of questions.

“Government contracts might not be approved. Those approved would be cancelled,” he added.

As for the bigger corporate figures who are linked to the opposition, Mahathir said they would be visited by the Inland Revenue Board (IRB) and MACC.

“Even when income and customs taxes are paid, additional payments are demanded. This additional payment is baseless but still demanded.

“If not paid, the account books are confiscated on the pretext to be checked. This disrupts business.

“Sometimes, the additional payments demanded are in the millions of ringgit. The businesspersons cannot be paid. The companies might be blacklisted, passports confiscated,” he added.

### **Expect dearer PTPTN loans**

Mahathir claimed that the monthly repayment rate would be increased for those who received National Higher Education Fund (PTPTN) loans.

“Those with no source of income cannot pay the installments. They would not be allowed to leave the country. They would be arrested by the immigration department,” he said.

Umno members and grassroots leaders, he claimed, are afraid of meeting those from rival parties.

“Basically, people are afraid of being seen with opposition parties let alone hold positions in these parties,” he added.

Mahathir also alleged that while votes are confidential, there are efforts to frighten the people that the government knows who is voting for which party.

“Because of this, they are afraid to vote for others apart from BN. Those who receive allowances which are not on the schedule (for example, fishermen) or recipients of BR1M are worried that they would be struck off the list.

“Many resort to whispering when expressing dissatisfaction with the government. They are worried Najib would hear them and take action,” he added.

## **Media cowed**

According to Mahathir, the print and electronic media are afraid that their licenses would be revoked if certain issues are reported.

“Like Umno members and leaders, they (the media) refrain from mentioning 1MDB and the RM2.6 billion in Najib's personal account.

“The Umno general assembly was silent on matters related to the US Department of Justice (civil forfeiture suits regarding 1MDB). They are afraid Najib would be angry.

“There are those who are aware of Najib's wrongdoings because they played a role in preparing documents... but are afraid to say anything.

“It is clear that almost all Malaysians are in fear because Najib can use officers and government departments to torture them...

“Yes. Malaysians now live in fear. They fear Najib. Because of this, they would vote for BN and BN would win. The climate of fear would continue,” he added.

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