

## **Dr M says govt may fall tomorrow, urges MPs to think of nation first**

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Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in a joint press conference with Umno's Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah this evening, said there is a possibility that Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's government might fall tomorrow.

In this happens, the former premier urged MPs to think of the common good instead of themselves.

The advice comes ahead of the last two committee stage votes for Budget 2021 in the Dewan Rakyat followed by the final vote at the third reading tomorrow.

"There is a possibility that when they vote for the third reading of the budget tomorrow, the government may lose.

"If the government loses, I hope those who are in Parliament do not think about themselves but of the nation instead.

"We need a government that is not motivated by what it gets but what it can contribute to the country," he told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

Based on the votes today, the opposition still does not have enough numbers to defeat the budget which acts as a proxy confidence vote on Muhyiddin.

Last chance to show their hand

Opposition leaders, including PKR president Anwar Ibrahim, have been lobbying government MPs, particularly from Umno to defect.

There have been signs of ruling MPs considering to do so but have yet to show their hand.

However, tomorrow would be their last chance to show their hand in the Dewan Rakyat.

Pressed why he was suddenly raising the possibility of the government losing the last budget vote when the opposition had failed to defeat it in the past weeks, Mahathir reiterated that the possibility was there.

He then proceeded to focus on a post-Muhyiddin government scenario.

"If (they) lose, then we have no government. So there is a need to form a new government but when we form a new government, we hope there will be a government that is dedicated to serving the country and people.

"Not because 'I want to become prime minister or because I want to become a minister or I can get good pay'. I hope the MPs choose wisely," he said.

Mahathir added that he and Tengku Razaleigh are prepared to do what is necessary to contribute to the country.

"We are going to try. We hope we will get the support to implement the ideas - the practical experiences we have - for the good of the country.

"If if there is no salary for us, it's fine. The government has paid a lot of pension money," he joked.

Coy about their potential role

Asked if he had prepared a line-up in anticipation of a possible change in government, the Langkawi MP replied: "The only line-up we want to see are people who are sincere people serving the people".

However, Mahathir and Tengku Razaleigh were coy about their potential role in the race to form a new government in the event if Muhyiddin's government really falls.

Asked if either of them may be a candidate for prime minister or deputy prime minister, Mahathir replied: "No suggestion".

He added that it will be up to the MPs to decide.

"If the government falls, then there will be a need for a new government. At this moment, unless we have a general election, the only way to form a new government is for the 222 MPs to begin to choose the government, perhaps beginning with the prime minister.

"And then to form a government that is dedicated to serving the people. I hope there are enough MPs who want to see this country recover and develop like before," Mahathir said.

He added that the current Perikatan Nasional government had been engaged in a lot of politicking instead of governing the country.

Mahathir said the government parties were occupied with trying to become

"dominant" at the expense of the country.

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