

Tun Dr Mahathir calls for Pak Lah to resign
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Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today his successor Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has "destroyed" the ruling coalition after disastrous weekend elections.
MCPX

mahathir pc 090308 talkMahathir, who led the ruling Umno which helms the Barisan Nasional coalition for 22 years before stepping down in 2003, lashed out after its worst performance in history.

"My view is he has destroyed Umno, destroyed the BN and he has been responsible for this," Mahathir told reporters.

He suggested Abdullah should resign, and said he had made a mistake in selecting him as prime minister.

"I think he should accept responsibility for this. He should accept 100 percent responsibility," he said.

"I am sorry but I apparently made the wrong choice."

Mahathir has previously said he never intended for Abdullah to serve more than one term, and that he should have opted instead for influential Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak who is now leader-in-waiting.

Worst ever result

BN suffered its worst ever result in Saturday's polls, losing its two-thirds majority in parliament for the first time since 1969 and conceding four more states to a resurgent opposition.

mahathir pc 090308 groupAbdullah was punished over rising crime and inflation in an election also tinged by rising racial tensions between majority Muslim Malays and minority ethnic Chinese and Indians.

"I think the people must have been very angry, all the races, Chinese, Malays and Indians," Mahathir said.

"The problem is we (the government) have become so arrogant. We suppress any opinion that we do not like and they begin to believe in their own reports which are not actually consistent with what is happening in the country."

Abdullah was Mahathir's hand-picked successor when he stepped down, but after the new leader dumped several of his pet projects he began launching accusations of economic mismanagement, nepotism and corruption.