

**Mahathir warns crossovers to Pakatan possible**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**May 7, 2008**  
**Andrew Ong**

Dr Mahathir Mohamad thinks there is a possibility of disgruntled Barisan Nasional MPs, in particular those from Sabah and Sarawak, joining the Pakatan Rakyat coalition to form the next federal government.

MCPX

The former prime minister today warned BN that the matter could not be taken lightly as another round of bad showing at the next general election would spell doom for the coalition.

"The urge to cross over, especially when there is no inherent loyalty to the party, is very strong. It can really happen. At first I wanted to dismiss this possibility. But in studying the situation, I feel there is great danger," Mahathir told reporters today.

Firstly, the vocal government critic said that there are MPs willing to cross over to Pakatan if there is something to gain such as positions and other benefits.

mahathir book event 210308 03Secondly, he believes that Barisan component parties in Sabah and Sarawak are not loyal to Peninsular Malaysia-based Umno and hence may form a coalition with Pakatan.

"If we take Umno, MCA, MIC - their roots are in the peninsula. They have not grown roots in Sabah and Sarawak. Even if you have Umno in Sabah, it's not the same. It's transplanted from here to there.

"Can we be sure that they will stay strongly loyal to Umno? I don't think so. Even here in the peninsula, if they can gain something for themselves, they are willing to cross over especially if they think they will be in the governing party," he added.

Mahathir said this when asked whether he thought the BN coalition, which he had led for 22 years, was taking the matter too lightly.

### **Force to be reckoned with**

Since the March 8 general election which saw the opposition bloc narrowly denying Barisan's two-third majority in Parliament, PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim had repeatedly trumpeted Pakatan's wresting of the federal government.

Generally, BN leaders have dismissed the claims although Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had stated that the coalition was taking Anwar's claims seriously.

Mahathir later agreed with a reporter's suggestion that Pakatan was a "force to be reckoned with" but with a caveat.

"Yes, they have become a force to be reckoned with. Not because they are strong or because the people love Pakatan Rakyat, but the feeling of disappointment and unhappiness is very strong on the ground (against Barisan)," he said.

Mahathir also warned that there is likely to be instability should Pakatan form the federal government, such as conflicts with the Malay Rulers.

He said that at present, there are already calls by certain Malay groups for a return to feudalistic rule in response to demands by non-Malays.

"They think that the solution is basically to abandon the concept of democracy and we should go back to feudal style of government.

"I don't know how serious this is, but the fact that they actually voice it, it is very disturbing," he said, in reference to the intensifying number of road shows by Malay intellectual groups throughout the country.

### **Conflict, instability**

Mahathir said that one example of such conflicts was the ongoing controversy surrounding Bukit Gelugor MP Karpal Singh's comments on the jurisdiction of the Perak sultan.

dap islamic state roundtable 100807 karpal singh"This is a preview of the future. In the future of course, if the opposition wins, then this kind of conflict will occur more often," he said.

Mahathir said that should Karpal had been hauled to court, the government would be hard pressed to ward off the veteran lawyer's legal arguments.

"They are unable to counter this kind of things. Are you going to arrest him and take him away in a police van like Raja (Petra Kamaruddin)? You do that, the whole world would see a picture of Karpal in a police van. I think this would have a terrible impact on the country," he added.

On Raja Petra being charged for sedition yesterday, Mahathir offered a very guarded response which did not reveal his detailed opinion on the matter.

"I really cannot see where he had been seditious. Certainly the headline is not seditious. I don't think he named anybody. But I have not read the whole thing. I'm not competent to comment," he said.

chedet mahathir blog 020508On whether Raja Petra's arrest was a warning to other bloggers, Mahathir advised bloggers to not go beyond the boundaries of the law.

"Some people are so keen to overstep the limit. But if you stay within the limit, even the most authoritarian government would not be able to contain the bloggers," he said.

Raja Petra, through his blog Malaysia Today, was among the most vocal supporters of Mahathir when the latter began to attack Abdullah in 2006.

Yesterday, he was jailed after refusing to post a RM5,000 bail for a sedition charge based on his article titled 'Let's send the Altantuya murderers to hell'.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news//82481>