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Take Anwar's threat seriously, says Dr M

PUTRAJAYA Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has asked the Barisan Nasional (BN) federal government to take Parti Keadilan Rakyat (AKP) boss Anwar Ibrahim's threat seriously that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) will form the next federal government in the near future as it has convinced more than 100 BN MPs to cross over to the opposition.

"I feel very strong about it. It can really happen. I first wanted to dismiss this possibility but on studying the situation I feel there is great danger. Of course, if the government loses power, it will not be in a position to dole out all kinds of goodies because at that time the clouds zone," he told reporters after delivering a keynote address on "National Sovereignty" at the 7th Perdana Discourse Series in the Perdana Leadership Foundation here.

Asked if this was his greatest fear, he said, "If the crossover were to take place, then Malaysia will experience a lot of conflicts."

BN has 140 MPs in the Dewan Rakyat and PR has 82 out of a total of 222 MPs.

"Well, I think it is a possibility that you can't dismiss lightly. Now, these politicians are interested in how much they get. They are not interested really in serving the nation," Mahathir said.

"People who feel that they did not get what they wanted presently and they are offered positions, they like to crossover, especially when there is no inherent loyalty to the party."

"We see the response of the Malays, for example, they have come up with a list of demands for this and that in response to the demands made by the

others. They think that the solution is to abandon this concept of democracy that they should go back to the feudalistic style of government."

"There is already talk among them. I don't know how serious it is but the fact that it is being actually voiced out is very disturbing."

Asked if there was any possibility of anarchy in the country, he said, "Probably, but not great anarchy. A certain possibility where the government of the day would not be active in attending to the progress of the country."

To another question on where the Opposition would obtain the 80 MPs, Mahathir pointed towards Sabah and Sarawak.

"If we take Umno, MCA and MIC, they have their roots here (in the peninsula) but not in Sabah and Sarawak. Although you have Umno in Sabah, it is transplanted from here to there. They are used to smaller parties. So can we be sure that they will remain strongly loyal to Umno? I don't think so," he said.

Even in the peninsula, there could be MPs who could crossover since they knew that they could be in the new government.

Mahathir said this crossover would not be a problem if BN had won by a two-thirds majority in Parliament as even if a BN MP were to cross over, he or she would not be able to gain much since the MP would still be with the Opposition.

"But now if they crossed over, they could be joining another government, they will not lose, in fact they can make money," he said. — Bernama

