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Dr M praises Najib's swift reforms

ON RIGHT TRACK: Government listening to the people and responding very quickly, says former PM

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's swiftness in addressing the various demands from the people has earned him praises from former prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir said Najib's decision to introduce reforms, such as the Peaceful Assembly Bill, was made to cope with the ever changing needs of the people.

"I think this government is listening to the people and responding very quickly," he said after a luncheon for delegates of the International Forum on "The Politics of Economic and Social Transformation in the Era of Global Crisis" here yesterday.

The forum, attended by representatives from 29 political parties

from 25 countries, including Iraq, Japan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Turkey, Vietnam and China, was held in conjunction with the Umno general assembly.

Dr Mahathir said Najib seem to be having a tougher time as he had to face criticism from various parties while enjoying a "smaller majority" of support in Parliament.

"He doesn't have the majority that I had. I had a (bigger) majority, that I was able to handle a lot of opposition. So, he has a hard time."

On facing the challenges, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was no longer isolated from the problems faced in other parts of the world, and needed to learn from the struggles faced by both developed and developing nations.

He cited the Arab Spring uprisings starting from Tunisia, and the economic crises in European countries as issues that needed to

be looked into.

"We cannot isolate ourselves from the rest of the world. The government should always look into the people's welfare to prevent them from staging an uprising."

Earlier, Dr Mahathir said the Western ideologies of the capitalist system, democracy and the freedom of expression were created for the good of the people, but could bring hardship if they were abused by those with economic and political powers.

He pointed out the problems faced by the capitalist system in the United States, which suffered greatly during the rise of East Asian superpowers like Japan and South Korea.

Dr Mahathir said the abuse in the currency market had led to financial crisis in several Asian nations in the late 1990s.

"When the Americans lost the market, they went into the financial (currency) market, which is not about producing goods, but instead, it is gambling.

"It is a smart idea, but it is a crooked idea. It is an abuse."

Dr Mahathir reminded the delegates to avoid "taking anything" when they are in power and focus on working for the people.

