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## Barisan govt now stronger under Najib, says Dr M

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Barisan Nasional government is now in a stronger position under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

He said if Najib were to give more time before announcing the date of the general election, support for the BN could be further strengthened.

"They (the opposition) said that after 55 years of the BN administration, it is time for a change. You should change for the better, but if the change is for something worse?" he told reporters at the Hari Raya open house at his residence here which was attended by about 10,000 people, including the prime minister.

Currently, the opposition was spreading the sentiment of hatred among the people against the government as one of its tactics, said Dr Mahathir.

He said the opposition's priority now was to instil the feelings of hatred against the government and including attacks made against himself who no longer held power.

"Why attack me as I have no power, it's as though there is this feeling of hatred against me, they live on such hatred."

He said the opposition's move to create resentment among the people would result in its own failure.

"How many policies have they come up with and has any of it been implemented?"

"Do not talk just for the sake of winning the election."

Dr Mahathir said problems in political parties were normal and were also faced by the opposition.

"Problems will be there as they are

part and parcel of politics, but mooted for an anti-party hopping law is unfair as it hampers one's political freedom," he said on DAP's proposal to amend the Penang state constitution to prevent party-hopping.

On veteran lawyer and DAP chairman Karpal Singh's call for the High Court to subpoena him (Dr Mahathir) and four others to explain why they were not charged with sedition over what they said during the parliamentary debate on the 1993 constitutional amendment that removed the immunity of the Malay rulers, Dr Mahathir asked Karpal to

prove his case.

"What was so-called seditious? Can he (Karpal) quote what I had said and show me what is regarded as seditious?"

On the idea to make the Hari Raya open house a calendar event in the country, Dr Mahathir said he lauded the idea as it would boost the country's tourism.

"This year's Hari Raya may be a moderate affair but the open house culture definitely is not affected by it and it should be pursued as a calendar event," he said during a press conference.