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Opposition rule will fail: Dr M

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> Ex-PM cautions against giving Pakatan Rakyat trial mandate

KUALA LUMPUR: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday cautioned the people about giving the Opposition a five-year trial mandate to rule the country, saying that it is a dangerous move because many things can be destroyed.

He said the many changes promised by the Opposition, such as no fees for education and no highway tolls, will fail like the socialists and communists who had tried the welfare state idea in the past.

"Malaysia has no ideology. But the reality is that the government needs money in order to develop the country and to subsidise living cost for the people.

"But when government foregoes taxes, tolls and fees, it will have less money. But it will have to spend more on running and maintaining utilities, expressways, schools, operational and development cost, pension and so on," he said in his latest posting on his blog, www.chedet.cc.

Mahathir said that in gathering

funds, it is okay to borrow if the money is invested and giving a return.

"But borrowing money in order to just spend will lead to non-payment of debts. That's what happened to Greece. It's bankrupt now. The whole of Europe cannot put it back together again," he said.

Mahathir said the people should look at the Barisan Nasional (BN) record in ruling the country since independence and compare it with other countries which gained independence at the same time, or even with the developed West.

"They are in deep financial trouble and, try as they might, they have not been able to overcome the crisis," he said.

He said that during the 1997-1998 financial crisis, the then deputy prime minister and finance minister (Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim) tried the International Monetary Fund (IMF) solution without the IMF loans, and banks and companies were faced



with the threat of bankruptcy from non-performing loans, raising the cost of imports as well as the cost of living.

"The track record of the minister of finance then was bad although there is a fondness of claiming success brought about by other people as his success.

"Now, opposition leader he is

claiming to bring about change. What good change did he introduce when he was in the government?" he asked.

He said Anwar was only interested in climbing the leadership ladder of Umno in order to become prime minister, and added: "How he achieved his objective does not bear scrutiny."

Mahathir cited some of Barack Obama's promises in his campaign to become the United States president four years ago which he failed to keep, including to close down the Guantanamo Detention Camp, stop trials of detainees by military courts, and to pull US troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Instead of pulling out from Iraq and Afghanistan he (Obama) approved a 'surge' in the troops sent to this areas. Later, he pulled out some troops but American soldiers are still in the two countries," he said.

The former prime minister said it is easy to make promises during election campaigns, but keeping them is a different matter. "The best hope is that people's memory is short. They would normally forget the promises. Now the Opposition in

Malaysia has copied Obama and is promising change," he said.

He said the Opposition will ensure the BN can not return, and will use the government officers to "gempar" (threaten) whoever tries to change government.

"Already we see this person (Anwar) who claims to fight for free speech suing and resorting to the courts to shut the mouths of his critics. Other powers of the government will be similarly abused. Nepotism and cronyism will be employed as indeed they are in the party he now heads."

He again asked Malaysians to look at the BN's track record after 55 years of ruling the country, and stressed that the people must not allow themselves to be hoodwinked as he was hoodwinked by the appearance of religious piety in the past.

Mahathir said the BN has listened to the people and has changed many laws and policies to bring a better future for them.

"All that the people need to do is to urge the BN to carry out whatever change the people desire. Better the devil you know than the angel you don't," he said. - Bernama