

Newspaper	The Sun
Date	20/09/2012

Dr M tips BN to win

the Sun - 20/9/2012

> But it will be weak without a convincing majority

BY MICHELLE CHUN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad expects Barisan Nasional (BN) to hold on to Putrajaya in the next general election, but without a convincing majority.

"In my opinion, BN will most likely win, but it will be weak without the strong majority in Parliament," he said in his keynote address at the Perdana Leadership Foundation CEO Forum 2012 yesterday.

"This means the federal government's authority will remain weak like it is now. This would hamper development and be bad for business," he warned.

"The ideal situation would be a two-thirds majority in Parliament, otherwise it will be like now, where BN is fighting to survive."

Mahathir, who is Perdana Leadership Foundation president, was addressing more than 500 top executives in his address titled *Post GE-13: What can Malaysians Expect?*

What they can expect, Mahathir said, depends on the government in power.

"Malaysians need to have confidence in the future, that it will not change radically. We've had the same government for 55 years, and if you change policies and plans suddenly, it won't be good for the country," he said.

However, if BN is returned in a weak state it would be unable to focus on economic development or the issues faced by the business community, he said. "If BN wins with a good majority, it won't be too troubled by opposition thwarting plans and

strategies. They can then put in place development plans for the country."

Adding that BN has had a long history and is a more balanced political coalition, Mahathir said the Opposition was trying to incite hatred and anger that will be translated into votes for them.

"The Opposition is rather fragmented, and internal conflict over issues, such as hudud, won't be very good for the country's future.

"If the government (supposing Opposition comes into power) wants to be popular by not collecting taxes, for instance, there will be more corruption than there is today."

Mahathir also said in jest that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak has "a lot of money and he's giving it away".

Asked whether such actions amounted to vote-buying, Mahathir said it was an easy option for the government with elections drawing near.

"I don't believe in giving money to people, I believe more in building facilities for people. Giving money is an easy option when you're short of time.

"It's not vote-buying but it's very close to that. Everybody expects to be given money today, and the response of politicians is to give what you ask for," he said.

On the issue of race, Mahathir said many people still want a link to their past and ancestry.

"Malaysians are still facing a dilemma where on one hand, we want to be Malaysians and on the other, we want to be identified by our race as well," he said.

However, he said, as a multi-ethnic country Malaysia has been largely peaceful and stable.



KAMARUDJAN MOHD NOR / THE SUN

Mahathir is accompanied by Berjaya Corporation Bhd chairman Datuk Robin Tan upon his arrival at the forum held at Berjaya Times Square Convention Centre.