

Pejuang not participating in Melaka by-election

Malay Reserve
— 26/10/2021
B.S. Y

On Budget 2022, Dr Mahathir says the govt might need to spend more next year, which will lead to a bigger borrowing

by ASILA JALIL

PARTI Pejuang Tanah Air will not field any candidate for the Melaka state election or participate in the campaign to show support for other parties that will be contesting.

Pejuang president Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the government of the day has portrayed itself as an administration that is not serious and only wants political gains from its position.

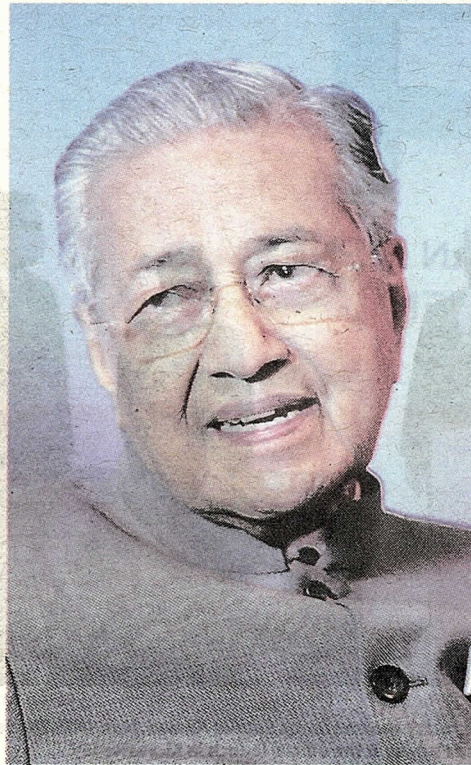
"It is useless to have a by-election because even if there is a new government, the people would not benefit from it. Therefore, Pejuang has decided to not contest in the state election," he said in a press conference yesterday.

The former prime minister (PM) also said the country will collapse if it is run by a government that easily destroys a sitting government and forms a new one, with the same people in power.

He stressed that Pejuang does not want to be involved in the political play that he claimed is causing chaos in the country.

"Pejuang does not want to be involved in this game. We will not participate in it and we believe that whoever is elected to be the government, no changes will take place."

He added that despite the new government ruling that does not allow for any social gatherings in regards to the polls taking place, it would be impossible to stop



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people from showing up in crowds for the election campaign.

The Election Commission (EC) has set Nov 8 for nominations for the Melaka state election, Nov 16 for early voting and Nov 20 for polling.

The Melaka State Legislative Assembly was dissolved on Oct 4 after four representatives withdrew their support for Chief Minister Datuk Seri Sulaiman Md Ali.

Dr Mahathir further said the Covid-19 situation in the country may worsen if politicians still insist on doing physical campaigns to gain votes for the state election.

"We just see a slowdown in new infections in the country. But we have seen in several countries where the number of new cases increased, despite recording lower daily infections recently.

"Although there is a new instruction from the government on the ban on social gatherings in Melaka, I believe people would not obey it especially when it comes to by-election," the Langkawi MP added.

On Sunday, the Health Ministry announced that it will not allow any social gatherings or events in Melaka relating to the state election during the period leading to polling day on Nov 20 to curb the spread of Covid-19 infections. The rule was effective on Monday and will end on Nov 27.

"This ban is in line with the list of unauthorised activities (negative list) in the National Recovery Plan's latest standard operating procedures for Phase 4, which include any activities that could lead to a congregation in a location and complicate physical distancing," said Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar.

Meanwhile, when asked to comment on the upcoming Budget 2022, Mahathir said it may not be an election budget but the allocation by the federal government may be big as it would be closely related to the pandemic.

The nonagenarian said the government might need to spend more next year, which will lead to a bigger borrowing.