

Dr M: Bad govt could be in power for five years

KUALA LUMPUR: While Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad lauded the stability that would come with the proposed Fixed-term Parliament Act (FTPA), the former premier says a “bad government” in power for five years would lead the country down an irreversible path of damage and destroy it.

In a social media post yesterday the country's two-time prime minister fired off a series of questions over Deputy Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's suggestion to introduce the FTPA to allow a government to complete

its full five-year term.

“What will happen if the government is led by a criminal who openly steals government money and abuses power?”

“What will happen when the economy breaks down and the people suffer?”

“What will happen if corruption becomes so common that all dealings with the government take a long time and depend on bribes given?” Dr Mahathir asked.

In situations like this, he said, a general election might be able to change the government, but “with the power and tools available, the

elections could be rigged and the same bad government could win”.

“The abuse of power by that government will then persist,” he added.

However, if democracy worked well, the ruling party could itself topple leaders who were criminals and liars, said Dr Mahathir.

“As a replacement, an upright and law-abiding leader could then be chosen to replace the destructive one.

“If the party does not drop its leader who is corrupt, then the people's representatives can stop supporting him.

“This will lead to his fall and maybe even the party's downfall and a general election can be held to elect a new government,” he said.

Ahmad Zahid's suggestion on the FTPA came on the heels of the “Dubai Move”, a purported plot led by the Opposition to overthrow the government.

His suggestion had been both praised and panned by many quarters, with some applauding it for ensuring stability and the country's economic well-being, and others calling it undemocratic.