

Dr M: People should know which leader to choose
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KUANTAN: After 12 general elections, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the people should know enough about who their real leaders were and who could only spew rhetoric.

"I think we are mature enough to know who can walk the talk and who cannot. If we do not vote for the right candidate, we will obviously not achieve Vision 2020," he said after a talk on the challenges facing the future leadership at the Universiti Malaysia Pahang campus in Gambang near here.

Dr Mahathir said it was unfortunate that many voters were still influenced by emotions and showed blind support for their favourite leaders despite knowing they were not capable of helping to achieve the vision.

"Elections should not be used (as a platform) to give a place to our favourite candidate, who can speak well but cannot deliver."

Recalling the often-used phrase "people deserve the government that they get", Dr Mahathir said voters only had themselves to blame when they chose the wrong candidates in the general election.

He said the opposition had continuously exploited issues, including portraying communists as heroes and championing the Bersih rally, to fish for votes as they had nothing of which they could show.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir said a good leader was one who was learned, farsighted and knew his history.

He said a future leader faced global challenges that were more elaborate and events in different parts of the world had far-reaching consequences.

Dr Mahathir advised the younger generation to arm themselves with knowledge and understand the needs of the people.

"It will help you to make the right decisions, without being influenced by emotions."

Dr Mahathir also said it was possible for Malaysia to have its first woman prime minister in the future with the increasing gender imbalance in institutions of higher learning.

"I don't see why a woman cannot be the prime minister, but not so soon. I am not sure if I will still be alive to see it," he quipped, drawing laughter from the floor.

More than 5,000 people attended the talk which was organised by UMP. Present were Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob and UMP Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Daing Nasir Ibrahim.

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