

Mahathir: Opposition will not form strong coalition
TheStarOnline
April 15, 2012
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PETALING JAYA: The Opposition parties do not have "what it takes" to form a strong coalition, said former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said they were only trying to emulate Barisan Nasional, whose power-sharing formula among parties representing all the races had been successful.

"Barisan's strength lies not only in the willingness of the component parties to make sacrifices and compromises but also in the existence of a core that binds the parties together.

"The core must be strong enough to act as a referee to resolve disagreements among component parties, and be fair at all times.

"Although it is an alliance of equals, it needs a strong core which can act as the first among equals.

"On the other hand, the core must not be too strong as to be able to go on its own. If it fails to get the support of the others, it will also fail," he said in his latest blog posting.

Dr Mahathir, who was prime minister for more than 20 years before stepping down in 2003, said Barisan's success in forming a strong government over the years had ensured peace and stability.

This paved the way for a successful transformation of the country from an agricultural-based economy to an industrialised nation, he said.

Touching on its poor performance in the 2008 general election, he said it was due to "extremely poor leadership" and not because the concept of the coalition had failed.

"For a country to develop, it needs a strong government that can ensure stability," he said, adding that the Pakatan Rakyat parties of PAS, DAP and PKR could not provide this.

Dr Mahathir warned that the Barisan government could fall if it wins (the general election) with a small majority.

He said such a scenario was possible as the component parties depended on one another to remain formidable.

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