

'Better the devil you know', Dr M tells voters
Malaysian Insider
August 22, 2012

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 22 — Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysians were better off with the “devil [they] know” in Barisan Nasional (BN) than a Pakatan Rakyat (PR) federal government he said was likely to bankrupt the country with its populist promises.

“The BN has listened to the people and has changed many laws and policies. All that the people need to do is to urge the BN to carry out whatever change the people desire.

“Better the devil you know than the angel you don’t,” the former prime minister wrote in a posting on his popular blog today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is expected to call for a general election soon, but attacks from PR and a number of scandals involving his administration have delayed such plans.

The Najib administration has also introduced a number of new policies as well as reversals in an attempt to blunt PR’s promises for reforms if the latter takes power.

The prime minister was forced to establish a royal commission to probe the problem of illegal immigrants in Sabah following a number of minor defections there to PR.

He has also promised to repeal the controversial Sedition Act, after abolishing other security laws earlier this year.

But PR has made dents in the BN armour with recent revelations involving a national cattle farming project scandal and by highlighting possible government interference in a contract for the city’s LRT extension project.

The federal opposition has also promised cheaper cars to Malaysians in return for support.

Writing in his blog today, Dr Mahathir appeared to compare PR with US President Barack Obama, and suggested that the opposition parties’ promises for change were just that — promises.

“In his campaign to become President of the US, Barack Obama promised change. He promised to close down Guantanamo Detention Camp. He promised to stop trials of detainees by Military Courts. He promised to pull out from Iraq and Afghanistan. Now, four years into his first term, he has failed to keep his promises.

“Now the opposition in Malaysia have copied Obama and is promising change.”

While he acknowledged that BN has ruled Malaysia for long, he pointed out that the coalition had a good track record.

“Five years to give (PR) a trial as government is dangerous. Many things can be destroyed in five years. Besides, the opposition as government will ensure there will be no return for the BN. Officers in the government will be used to ‘gempar’ (threaten) whoever tries to change government.

"Already we see this person who claims to fight for free speech suing and resorting to the courts to shut the mouth of his critics. Other powers of the government will be similarly abused.

"Nepotism and cronyism will be employed as indeed they are in the party he now heads," he said in an apparent reference to Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

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