

**Pakatan regime won't bankrupt nation, says Musa Hitam**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**March 13, 2013**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 — Malaysia will not become bankrupt if Pakatan Rakyat (PR) trumps the Barisan Nasional (BN) to take Putrajaya, Tun Musa Hitam said as concern grows over the nation's economic state amid a possible regime change in the coming polls.

The former deputy prime minister appeared to defend the opposition pact, which has been forecast by politicians and some observers aligned to the ruling BN coalition as likely to empty the nation's coffers and scare off foreign investors with their proposed public policies in their bid to take federal power.

"That is a political statement; in my opinion, no. In fact, I have openly commented on this matter, including to bankers and outsiders.

"If the opposition were to rule, they would not make foreign investors run away. They will not do so and bankrupt the economy," Musa was quoted as saying at a news conference in Shah Alam yesterday by Malay language news website, Sinar Harian Online.

The 78-year-old, who had been in office from 1981 to 1986, was reported saying the pact would work hard to maintain the country's economic growth should it win in the 13th general election as it was important to present a positive picture to draw in investors.

Without naming any one person or party, he lashed out at PR's critics who have been mounting a psychological campaign against the PKR-DAP-PAS partnership by repeatedly casting doubt on their election manifesto.

"If you accept the concept of democracy, you will therefore not say another party will bankrupt the nation," Musa was quoted saying.

Malaysia's economy grew 5.4 per cent last year, slightly above the economy's potential rate of about five per cent, global research house Moody's Analytics reported last month.

Southeast Asia's third-largest economy will weather the next general election and maintain its robust growth even if there is a change in government, renowned world economist Nouriel Roubini told the Datum Economic Forum 2013 here on March 1.

Roubini, also known in the media as "Dr Doom" for his consistently pessimistic economic outlook, gave his prediction amid previous warnings by names such as veteran statesman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and former police chief Tan Sri Musa Hassan that Malaysia will descend into political and economic chaos should PR win the next polls.

"I would say whatever the result is going to be, this country has shown institutional and political stability.

"Investors recognised that, and therefore as long as there is a democratic process, as long as there'll be policy clarity after those elections, it's certainly going to be positive," he said.

The PKR-DAP-PAS opposition parties had won 82 out of 222 federal seats in Parliament and four states in Election 2008, denying the BN their traditional two-thirds supermajority.

The landmark win has boosted the opposition bloc in their bid to topple the BN and form the next federal government.

Malaysia is expected to go to polls in the next few weeks.

Analysts have said the possibility for a regime change has emerged for the first time ever since the country's independence in 1957.

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