

**Two-thirds essential for decisive government, says Dr M
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 – A two-thirds parliamentary majority is essential to create a more “decisive” Barisan Nasional (BN) federal government, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today, lamenting that the present administration has had to pander to critics on issues like the New Economic Policy (NEP), because of its weak standing in Parliament.

He said his Vision 2020 targets was possible with such a strong government.

“Because of that weakness (from losing two-thirds), it appears as if it is difficult for the government to proceed with policies that were established before.

“It (the government) is exposed to threats and pressure from parties that oppose, particularly the NEP, and because the government is in a weak position, it has had to entertain some of these NEP critics,” he said during a discussion and book-signing session for his new release “Blogging to Unblock Book 2: A Citizen’s Rights” at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) this evening.

“If we want a firm government, we must support the government so that they get more than two-thirds in Parliament,” he added.

Dr Mahathir (picture) has been going on the stump for BN across the length and breadth of the country, urging voters to stay with the ruling pact that he led for 22 years during his tenure as prime minister.

The veteran leader, who took time off from the campaign trail for this evening’s book signing, said the current government appears to be heading in the right direction despite using approaches that may be “different from what we hoped for”.

“I find that there was a time between 2003 and 2009 when leaders were not so interested in the plans made by those before them,” said Dr Mahathir, who was prime minister from 1981 to 2001.

“The current leaders still speak about 2020... and that alone places us on the right track to achieve this vision.

“For certain some efforts may be different from what we had hoped for... however, I am confident that Malaysia can still achieve Vision 2020,” he said.

Despite his advanced years, Dr Mahathir has been keeping a tight schedule recently, touring every corner of the country, including across the South China Sea in remote villages in the two Borneo states of Sarawak and Sabah as the face of BN’s fight to stay in power after Election 2013.

The fourth prime minister appears to be Datuk Seri Najib Razak’s campaigner-in-chief as he fronts the BN’s ceramah circuit to spread its power-sharing formula for stability as the world continues to be rocked by political and economic crises that have increased the number of jobless and created social unrest in Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

Senior members of the Mahathir Cabinet also appear to be ditching their low-public profile after retirement from the government to pitch similar messages and swing voter support for Najib.

Former Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin emerged from his political cocoon recently and advised Najib to axe the deadwood from within the current Cabinet.

The 74-year-old government pensioner's remarks appeared to be sharp criticism of the present administration, but Daim was also reported to have said that Najib was doing a "fairly good job" as the country's sixth prime minister and was confident the BN would win the elections.

Most recently, former Works Minister Datuk Seri Samy Velly was reported declaring himself a "winnable candidate" to stand for elections although he lost his Sungai Siput federal seat by a substantial 1,821-vote majority to political greenhorn and socialist Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj in Election 2008.

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