

**Wrong to impose regime change if people not ready, says Dr Mahathir**  
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**BY JENNIFER GOMEZ**

There is no point forcing a regime change if the people are not ready for it.

This is the view of Malaysia's longest serving prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad (pic), on the political situation in Egypt.

Dr Mahathir said there should be a focus on the next generation because they are more appreciative of the benefits of a democratic system.

"The most important point is that some will lose in elections. They must then be patient enough to wait for the next election. A bad government is better than a destabilised one," he said.

Dr Mahathir went on to add that if a government were really bad, it would not win the following general election.

"The losers in the last election may then have a chance to win. And when they win, a genuine regime change would take place," he wrote on his blog chedet.com.

According to him, while regime change may be desirable, it is wrong for the West to impose it on people who are not prepared for it.

Instead, Dr Mahathir said that there should be an educational process and that the principles of democracy should be allowed to spread slowly.

He said western powers appeared to have learnt lessons from their experience in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He added that these powers once thought that it would take only a few months of "shock and awe" to achieve regime change in these countries.

"But after ten years of war, after losing thousands of their own soldiers while killing hundreds of thousands of Afghans and Iraqis, devastating these countries, the regime changes have not resulted in the democracy they expected.

"If at all, the present situation in these two countries is much worse than before invasion and the regime changes," he wrote.

On Egypt, Dr Mahathir noted a prevalent view that the country fared better under former leader Hosni Mubarak, when the North African nation was stable and people could earn a living.

"With the demonstrations against Mubarak and then against Morsi and now against the military rulers, the instability is hurting ordinary people.

"They wish the rebellion had never taken place," he said, referring to the former Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi who was ousted by the military last July. – September 28, 2013.

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