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Beyond Teluk Kemang: Face the truth wisely

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AFTER four days of listening to speeches at the 7th World Editors' Forum and the 53rd World Association of Newspaper Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, I have decided to reflect on issues at home.

First on my mind is the Teluk Kemang by-election result which was not too pleasing. Chairman of the Barisan Nasional Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, contrary to his public image, is quite an open-handed leader and a good listener. In fact, as one senior minister intimated to me, he can be "too good" a listener at times.

Well before the last general election and more so now, he has been shedding the alleged protectionist shield and is opening himself to several views within Umno as well as beyond the BN traditional territory.

With a growing young IT-savvy population, he realises that whether we like it or not, a mental revolution has begun in our nation and is poised to bring in huge changes. There must be impetus for such changes and to apprise them all the time.

The alliance of Umno, MCA and MIC brought us independence and a grand alliance (consisting of the Malayan Alliance and pro-Malaysia parties in Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak) formed Malaysia in 1963.

Umno and the BN, I know, are convinced that they must not only be part of the revolution, they have to lead it through political adaptation or become, as their opponents passionately wish, irrelevant. Shape up or lose out.