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## Discard racial politics in nation-building

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent statement on the possibility of a non-Malay becoming Prime Minister gives rise to some important things to reflect upon.

It appears that Dr Mahathir has transcended the norms that shackle the minds and hearts of ordinary men.

I see in him the flowering of a statesman and the emergence of a stature that is the essence required in a pluralistic society to unite the people for the common good of the nation as a whole.

Such thinking and statements can also bring problems, as other people in leadership positions operate at a lower mental and spiritual plane and will attempt to touch on base values and sentiments found in parochial minds.

Such leaders are quite unmindful of the well-being of our society. If bringing people to work together by stressing similarities is good for the economic health and well-being of society, they do not mind stressing dissimilarities to divide the nation or even create new artificial or superficial barriers.

Their personal desire for position and power seems to come above the needs of national good and the aspirations of Malaysian society.

We lamented the "divide-and-rule" strategy of colonial powers but, today, many in leadership roles have acquired an aptitude for the "self-divide" (dividing Malaysians by ourselves), and are quite adept at it.

They do not mind if their "self-divide" actions and statements result in something negative for the nation.

Dr Mahathir's speech is set out on a lofty platform. I don't see many Malaysians on it, although we all know that the essence of good leadership lies in bringing out the best in people and in motivating people from diverse cultures to build the nation to achieve lasting peace, increasing harmony and growing prosperity for all.

Everyone must find a place under the sun in a socio-political environment that fosters the development of the human being. The essence of good leadership that edifies is not rooted in racial politics. Let's discard the old formula and work towards a happy, united and prosperous Malaysia based on an unshakeable, underlying goodwill, and trust this approach as the road to a secure future.