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Way forward for BN

THE Barisan Nasional's concept of moderation and multi-racial co-operation is the best thing that had happened to this country. There is no doubt that despite the strains and stresses over the years it has been remarkably successful in governing and leading the nation since we gained our independence. Some Malaysians, especially those from the younger generation, may have a lot of complaints about the country but if they compare us with other developing countries dispassionately, they will have to accept the reality; that we have the coalition to thank for providing us with a relatively harmonious environment.

However, the achievements of the past alone do not guarantee that Barisan Nasional will continue to command the kind of support from the people that it has been used to. BN chairman and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has made it clear that to ensure the people's continued support, the coalition must prove its capability in bringing further progress to the country. To do this will require a lot of dedication, hard work and unity among the various component parties in the coalition.

What is also needed is for the coalition to adopt a new approach to deal with a changing society, especially the younger generation. They are generally better educated, Internet and IT savvy and have lot of energy which make them impatient to get things moving quickly.

The Barisan Nasional will have to adjust and keep pace with the rapid changes in society, and attune itself with the thinking and aspirations of the younger electorate. It will then be able to come out with policies and decisions which are relevant and acceptable to the young and the old alike.

The coalition has brought the nation to where it is now, with Malaysians enjoying a reasonably high standard of living and with a good infrastructure, through the sincerity, dedication and close co-operation among the leaders and members of the component parties. Sound economic policies and a strong administration under the Barisan Nasional Government are well known to the people and foreign investors.

These good attributes of the coalition need to be strengthened further as it moves forward, to convince the people, including the more sophisticated younger generation, that there is really no alternative to the Barisan Nasional.

Malaysia's Vision 2020 to become a developed nation is meant to galvanise the people of all races to work towards a greater goal but this goal can only be achieved under the coalition. Its component parties must continue to be vigilant, expose and counter the propaganda and lies spread by the Opposition to undermine the people's confidence and support for the Barisan Nasional in working towards Vision 2020.

Only the coalition, which rejects racial and religious extremism, will be able to ensure the political, social and economic stability that will provide the conducive environment for us to attain the objectives of a developed nation.

However, the leaders of the coalition's component parties have a heavy responsibility to enhance co-operation among themselves, solve problems together and to work towards the goal of functioning as a party rather than as a coalition. Transforming the coalition to more of a party will require a lot of goodwill and a change of mindset among the component

parties and it will take time to evolve. But it is something to look forward to in future.

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