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Backing for power-sharing formula

Zubaidah Abu Bakar; Chow Kum Hor; Sajahan Waheed; Aniza Damis; Ahmad KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said today the party will continue to strengthen the Barisan Nasional's power-sharing formula which has proven to be successful in bringing progress to the country.

Ong, who is Housing and Local Government Minister, said the people had supported the formula since it was first practised by the Alliance, Barisan Nasional's predecessor.

He added that it was because of the power-sharing concept that Malaysia had enjoyed peace and stability and this had allowed the economy to prosper.

"After the Alliance, this concept was extended to include other ethnic groups from Sabah and Sarawak, leading to the formation of the Barisan Nasional. BN has become a very strong coalition under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad," he said at the BN's 50th anniversary celebrations at Stadium Merdeka.

Ong also expressed confidence that after Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi succeeds Dr Mahathir next month, Abdullah would continue the power-sharing formula.

He reminded the young to study the power-sharing concept and to retain the formula which had brought so much development.

He added that BN component parties must be prepared to face new challenges like globalisation and the information technology era.

The component parties must also enhance their co-operation to thwart attempts by the Pas-led Opposition to set up an Islamic State which did not take into account the society's diversity.

Ong attributed BN's success over the years to Dr Mahathir's leadership and his sensitivity towards the sentiments of the different races.

"Dr Mahathir has always stressed that no single race should take all and often reminded us of the need to give and take. Although this may not make all BN component parties happy, it has ensured stability for BN and the country," Ong added.

Since Dr Mahathir took over the BN leadership in 1981, Ong said the coalition had successfully retained two-thirds majority in the Dewan Rakyat in five general elections.