

**The comatose Malay  
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Is this the sign of things to come in Malaysia? The organisers of former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad's talk on the 'Malay race and the future' banned non-Malay reporters and television crews. Reporters today, who next tomorrow?

**And Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak just looks on pathetically?**

The talk at the Tun Hussein Onn Memorial is an insult to Hussein Onn's memory. He was highly regarded for fostering racial unity. His firmness against anyone creating racial unrest, earned him the soubriquet Bapa Perpaduan or 'Father of Unity'.

When will we accept that the solution to the problem Malaysia faces can only be resolved when the Malays come out of their self-imposed coma?

As a Malay who has benefited from higher education and exposure to what the world has to offer, I am appalled at what Mahathir and Umno's leaders are doing to the Malays.

Instead of leading us into the 21st century, they are still talking about the golden age of yesteryear.

Instead on embracing change and catching up with the rest of the world, we are still debating who this country belongs to.

Instead of being enthused by all the exciting changes that are happening elsewhere in the world, we act like children in the playground, and refuse to yield to reason.

It is simple; this country belongs to all Malaysians who are prepared to work hard to see the country prosper. Its citizens will benefit from the collective effort of the people.

In his talk, Mahathir said everyone had to accept that Malaysia belongs to the Malays and that the country belongs to the culture and language of the dominant community; however he added that 'Bangsa Malaysia' has helped strengthen national unity.

Isn't this a contradiction of terms? How can you have 'Bangsa Malaysia' and a country just for the Malays?

In his opinion, all rabangsa malaysia multiracial malaysiaces must accept that they are from 'Bangsa Malaysia' to allow better cooperation between the different races and guarantee the future of the country. Didn't he also say that the country belongs to the Malay race? Don't these remarks clash?

He said: "... Peninsular Malaysia was known as Tanah Melayu..... We must be sincere and accept that the country is Tanah Melayu."

He explained that the country's forefathers gave the Chinese and Indians citizenship because they expected the communities to respect Malay sovereignty.

He is telling the non-Malays that they are second-class citizens here. He conveniently

overlooks the non-Malays who have been more than willing to identify themselves as Malaysian rather than by their racial origin.

How dare he say that Malays will feel less threatened if the country adopts the concept of 'Bangsa Malaysia'?

### **Insecurities exploited**

Malays feel threatened because Mahathir keeps telling them that if they relax their guard, they will be trampled by the non-Malays and that the country will be sold to the Chinese.

Mahathir and the succession of Umno leaders are not leading the country forward. Instead of opening up the Malay mind, they are closing it.

Umno leaders are leading the Malays into a comatose state. Just like a person in a coma, who is able to hear outside influences, the Malay mind is unable to contribute towards the conversation and get out of his vegetative state.

These leaders have worked on the Malay psyche to further their personal cause. The Malays have always been a feudalistic and fatalistic race.

Instead of bringing out the best in Indian rubber plantation workers, these leaders have worked on their insecurities and kept them hopeless and pessimistic.

The non-Malays who came to Malaya were spurred by adversity and knew that they had to work to make a success of their lives.

Not so the Malays who had always enjoyed the bountiful harvests of the land - the rivers, seas or the smallholding that they could cultivate whatever they wanted.

What Umno leaders have done is to control the Malays because - that way - they control their personal fortunes.

Mahathir and Najib may have tried to give the impression that they disagree with each other. Mahathir champions 'Bangsa Malaysia' and denigrates Najib's '1Malaysia' concept. They hope that between them they will win over all the Malays.

### **Grip on power**

Only a fool would be deceived by that ploy. The truth is that both Mahathir and Najib are one another's keepers.

If Mahathir falls, Najib knows he has no more protection and vice-versa. It also applies to the rest of the Umno/BN hierarchy. Thus it is important they keep their clique going for as long as is possible.

Mahathir has the extremist Perkasa to release on the wider community. The Malays who do not believe in such extremist views simply fall into Najib's lap. That way the Malays are still under their control.

The Malay mindset has to change. There are many who think like me but are fearful of speaking out for fear of a public backlash. That is understandable.

If they continually stay in the shadows, how will their children and grandchildren benefit? The policies of this BN government are not based on fairness and equality. Not everyone can aspire to be an Umnoputra.

They must realise that the method employed by Mahathir and Najib is one of control. They keep the Malays hopeless and in a state of pessimism. They frighten the Malays into thinking that if they are not careful, the non-Malays will dominate their lives. Mahathir and Najib are skilled in demoralising people.

Malays like me have managed to get out from under our tempurung. Malay women like me have had to fight various forms of discrimination to enjoy the benefits that the world has to offer those who are prepared to work hard.

We did not do this in isolation but with the assistance of everyone: male and female, young and old, non-Malay and Malay, Muslim and non-Muslim.

Our fear is that eazlanxtremist views will hamper the efforts of women to improve themselves in the modern world. This is already happening with the influence of ultra-religious views.

People like Mahathir and Najib know that their power is secured for as long as they can control the Malay mind.

They both know that educated and confident people are much harder to control and hence to govern.

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