

Dr M: Scrapping raced-based policies will lead to riots
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After 54 years of independence, former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad still thinks that Malaysia is not ready to let go of race-based affirmative action.

NONE In a blog posting today, Mahathir said the country would descend into “chaos” without such policies, as the economic divide between the races will grow too wide.

“Maybe it’s true that Malaysia would grow faster if it is unburdened by racial issues.

“But when the distribution of wealth between races is so wide, there is likely to be animosity between the poorer race and the richer one,” he said.

Such enmity, he said, would cause great social tensions which will lead to “instability and expose it to chaos and rioting”, and eventually negatively impact the economy.

Mahathir, who was prime minister for 22 years, added that it was also globally acknowledged that multiracial Malaysia grew faster than other developing countries which do not have to deal with racial matters.

“As the Malay saying goes, telan mati bapak, luah mati emak (you’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t). But better to have slower progress than to be destroyed by riots,” he said.

'Debates never prohibited'

Meanwhile, Bernama reports that Mahathir said the Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA) is relevant for university students who are incapable of self-responsibility or those who do not appreciate the privileges accorded to them.

Mahathir, who asserted this when asked whether the Act was still relevant, said the government never prohibited students to organise debates in the university.

“What we forbid is their action to go and campaign here and there; people paid to educate us... we study on other people’s money so we should be responsible to those who sponsored us by studying well.

“A lot of Malay students gained entry into universities not because of their academic achievements; if they don’t work hard they will lag behind.

“They should focus on and complete their studies, obtain a job, have an income, and then they can do what they like,” he told reporters after attending a discourse series in conjunction with the International Year of Cooperatives 2012 in Alor Setar.

Mahathir said students should not think that they could not become good politicians if they did not get involved in demonstrations, adding, “During my time there were no demonstrations, yet (I) turned out to be quite a wise politician”.

“What is regrettable is that those who are objecting to the UUCA are Malay students and not the other races.

“I am not racist but Malay youths who were not highly qualified are the ones who wanted so much to have the act repealed. The UUCA is not relevant if we know how to take care of ourselves,” he said.

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