

Dr M: Our democracy less false than US

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By Hafiz Yatim

The United States has a false democracy because they harass people without the benefit of the law, said Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The former premier in commenting the Canadian newspaper The Globe and Mail labelling current Premier Najib Abdul Razak as a false democrat, said in America they torture people from around the world and this is “false democracy”.

“We (Malaysia) have not reached that stage yet. We are false but we are a little bit less false than they are,” he said sarcastically.

The Malaysian Foreign Ministry has sent a letter to the daily following such labelling.

The Globe and Mail, an influential Canadian national newspaper in an article entitled ‘1A 21st century check list of the new autocrats’, written by its award-winning Beijing bureau chief Mark Mackinnon, had classified Najib as a ‘false democrat’, despite several reforms done.

Mahathir was speaking to reporters after delivering a keynote address entitled ‘Decoding Malaysian Politics: The implications on financial institutions’ organised by Affin Bank Bhd.

The long-time premier, in his speech, had defended race-based politics in charting the country’s progress and said there was no true democracy.

Mahathir said there is no such thing as government of the people, for the people and by the people as sometimes the minority rules.

“Using the United States as an example, he said only 30 percent of its population voted for the presidency and in the end it is only 16 percent of the population who decide on who would rule for them for four years. Is that a majority government?” he mocked, saying countries are being ruled by the minority.

He said democracy is where the majority rules and the majority should be 51 percent and above.

“But that seemed difficult to achieve if we have three different parties and this would result in no parties being able to garner 50 percent,” he said in lending credence to his assertion that the minority rules.

He cited the experience in Egypt and Tunisia during the Arab Spring as an example, saying it was not a movement by the majority but was started by a minority and which later became big.

Using the Egypt example, he said the recent presidency was determined after the top two

candidates were chosen from a pool of many candidates.

'Malaysians becoming more racist'

Mahathir also described Malaysians as becoming more racist despite achieving independence after 64 years, but he defended race-based politics as practised by his long-ruling Barisan Nasional.

The founding fathers of Malaysia, he said, decided that we cannot have a non-racial party governing this country.

“We need to have a country ruled by every race. And that is why we have decided on a coalition of racial parties. That is the best that we can have and we have to accept it,” he said.

“Obviously the next general election will be about race. Who gives what, who gets what based on race and we forget the greater interests of the nation. If we thought about the greater interests of the nation we would not think about race any more,” said the former premier.

He added that whether we like it or not, that is the sentiment of the people, they like to be identified with their race as this is strongly felt by everyone.

“Unfortunately, we have become more racist compared to in the past. It is sad but that is the fact of the matter. Emphasis is placed on what my race gets and you are not thinking about the future growth of the country,” he said.

Saying that we have to look beyond race, Mahathir said the world is in such turmoil as there are political, financial, economic and social turmoil, and there is a need to focus on a common direction for the country.

He cited the social turmoil of people wanting equal rights like the LGBT (lesbians, gays, bisexual and transvestites), which is about men marrying men and women marrying women, and this would bring about the destruction of civilisation.

“This is unnatural. Just imagine if we all indulge in that. If we have men marrying men, and women marrying women, there will be no children. One generation and the whole human race will be wiped out. It is not meant like that,” he said.

“Freedom is not meant like that as initially it was meant to give women the right to vote after the First World War, and that is accepted. From there it went to women’s rights. Now we have a corrupt moral values following an extension of a gift that is supposed to be limited but interpreted in a different way by the recipients,” he warned.

He went on further to describe that street demonstrations can be dangerous as they could result in the fall of governments.

