

Dr M urges gov't to ban 'water villages'

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'Water villages', networks of houses built on stilts on Sabah's coast, should no longer be allowed, as they can be used for foreign intrusion and contribute to pollution, said former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We used to station immigration officers on the water villages, but now we station them on land. So foreigners are free to come into the water villages to do what they want.

"Even if they carry weapons we cannot check... To inspect the water villages are difficult because of the cramped walkways, it makes us open to attacks (ambushes)," said Mahathir while fielding questions from the floor at a dialogue on the feasibility of a two-party system in Malaysia organised by the Universiti Malaya Alumni Association (Paum).

"I think after this, we cannot allow water villages. They also generate effluent," he warned.

His warning came after six Malaysian policemen were killed in a deadly ambush by armed intruders representing a claimant to the Sulu sultanate on the cramped walkways of a water village in Semporna Sabah, whilst conducting a raid.

Two-party system

In his speech earlier, Mahathir also stated that Malaysia is already practicing a two-party system as the contest for the upcoming general election and the elections before it were between two coalitions.

The battle, he said, is between the BN and Pakatan Rakyat as smaller parties not aligned to either will disappear as they realised they cannot win any seats against the might of the two coalitions.

However, he believes that a pre-election coalition like the BN is stronger, while a post-election coalition like Pakatan is now is just a marriage of convenience.

Mahathir posited that for the Malaysian political climate, a two-party system can only work if the two opposing entities are effectively coalitions, as Malaysia's racially divided political landscape favours a coalition that can represent all races and where all their voices can be heard.

"Racialism is an important factor in Malaysian politics," he argued, as we all still identify ourselves by our community and race.

A party based on a single race, he said, will not work.

Mahathir also cast aspersions to the feasibility of a proportional representation system as opposed to Malaysia's first-past-the-post geographical constituency-based system.

He believe that a proportional representative system would split up the electorate and make it impossible to form an effective government.

Meanwhile, Mahathir praised the current system because it was "very democratic" as it allowed almost anyone to stand as candidate.

'I'll give Pakatan Proton'

In his trademark sarcastic tone, Mahathir pointed out that the lack of required qualification meant that even an illiterate can be a politician, reminiscing about an illiterate federal minister who couldn't even sign his name and only did so with a cross sign.

"Even to be an office boy you need qualifications... While others must be intelligent, our leaders can be stupid," he jibed.

The former premier also took potshots at the Pakatan Rakyat's manifesto, reiterating his belief that it is dangerous to give the opposition five years to see if their manifesto would work, as even in that short span, the nation can be destroyed.

"They want to make cars at RM25,000 a piece? I'll give them Proton, see if they can do it." he jokingly challenged.

Mahathir said it is not necessary to give Pakatan a chance at rule as currently available statistics should be enough to calculate and show how their manifesto can bankrupt the nation.

"I know something about this, as I have some experience running national finance, just some 22 years as PM."

The former PM also repeated his admission that there are many things wrong with BN as "having been in power, power goes to their head," and abuses of power have and continue to occur.

But he still prefers those he is familiar with to be in power despite their abuses as he believe that if Pakatan were to take power, they will also commit abuses and maybe even more.

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