



The BN
dilemma
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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's warning that "Malays would lose power if Pakatan Rakyat were to come to power", is not his first racist rant since his retirement.

He delights in taking pot-shots at Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's administration and excels at instigating unrest. Why would the Malays lose power under Pakatan? The Malays lost whatever power they had under 22 years of Mahathir's rule.

Mahathir is racist, but Najib would not dare charge him with sedition. Mahathir certainly acts like he is the 'co-premier' and his flirtation with extremist NGOs like Perkasa, must embarrass the current administration.

At times, we can be forgiven for thinking that he must be the second most powerful person in the government. His ruthless desire to cling onto the reins of power and pretend to speak out for ordinary Malays must create chaos in government circles. He is great at divide-and-rule.

If he is the 'Father of Modernisation', then he is out of touch with the people of 21st century Malaysia. Most Malaysians would be open-minded and accepting of one another, but for the politicians. I would accept a non-Malay prime minister of either sex and sexual preference, provided that person is a strong and capable leader.

Malaysia's riches lie not its mineral wealth or its agricultural produce; its most important resource is its people. Why can't we set aside racism and simply move forward?

We are a hardworking nation but Mahathir's policies, perpetuated by his successors, have degraded us. With 10 years left until 2020, by when he hopes Malaysia becomes a developed nation, we still bicker over which race does what, where and when. Instead of emulating our neighbours, we behave like children squabbling in the playground.

Isn't it a bit rich for Mahathir to suggest that Pakatan leaders might be a bunch of self-serving and racist politicians?

Mahathir and the other politicians in the BN coalition have already proven themselves to be self-serving and racist.

Research has shown that politicians are the least trusted group of people. The history of politics is the history of lies, and Mahathir could be considered the most professional in this group.

Once people like him have tasted power and climbed the ladder of authority, the lies, deceit and cover-ups have a cumulative effect.

He hates ordinary Malays to get on with their non-Malay counterparts and yet his chums are powerful Chinese tycoons.



Absurd claim

Mahathir is vehemently against the west and accuses it of undermining countries. However, he was happy to offer George W Bush his full support and cooperation in the aftermath of the Sept 11, attacks. He used this tacit approval to tighten his grip on political dissenters at home, using the

ISA.

He has a problem with western values and their concept of 'absolute freedom' and told the US Congress in Washington: "The west is very impatient. You want overnight change."

And yet, for 22 years, he altered the Malaysian landscape with his policies which polarised us, increased corruption, worsened nepotism and created the systematic destruction of our institutions.

His argument is that the Malays would lose power under Pakatan. That is absurd. He leaves the non-Malays with a persecution complex or the Malays feeling victimised.

This man is prepared to sacrifice the ordinary person to protect his, and his cronies' domination of wealth and power. Malaysians from all walks of life are left frightened, angry and worried.

Similarly, the Umno cohorts are also fearful of what will become of them when Pakatan gains power. We, the taxpayers of Malaysia, want them jailed and our money returned.

Mahathir and other extremist leaders imagine we're living in a Malaysia where the Malay reigns supreme for life.

Ideas like these will cripple the nation. This is the power that Mahathir has over easily-influenced and unprincipled Malays.

Malaysia is financially insecure. Our civil service is shored up with injections of cash even though large swathes of it are overstaffed and inefficient.

Mahathir has turned the Malays into a work-shy part of the Malay community. The country is suffering economically and our most gifted people seek jobs abroad. Talk of Malay rights just distracts Malays from valuing hard work and rewards.

The anomaly is that Bangladeshi fishermen are invited to take up 6,000 jobs in our fishing industry. Why? What happened to our once thriving fishing economy? Where are the government policies to modernise our fishing fleet and lift our fishermen out of poverty?

Taxpayers' money is indiscriminately spent on divisive projects like the Biro Tata Negara (BTN, National Civics Bureau) or the unpopular National Service (NS). A few months of NS are insufficient for promoting unity. The BTN indoctrination traps Malays in a dependency culture.

Power-mad talk

Racial harmony and unity is an ongoing process, best started as early as possible in life. Mahathir's racist policies are myopic. They have neither made Malaysia better nor improved the lives of the Malays, or any other poor Malaysians.



Let us not kid ourselves. Mahathir is not making the Malays 'gain power' or 'have power'. He is merely referring to Umno's (and BN component partners) hold onto power, over us. It is for their own ends - and certainly not ours.

What happens if people did not vote Pakatan? By Mahathir's reckoning, the Malays will still have power.

'Power' is meaningless if people still don't qualify to tender for contracts, have to pay a higher road-toll, are at the mercy of trigger-happy policemen or racist school principals, don't trust the judiciary, cannot afford cars or houses, and face escalating prices for petrol, electricity and basic foodstuffs?

Who will the Malaysians blame then? It won't be Pakatan. It will be Mahathir, his cronies and Umno.

Mahathir's power-mad talk has only managed to cause tensions to rise. As a retiree who has caused irreparable damage to race relations, why doesn't he just stick to making the bread rise in his bakery business, 'The Loaf'?

Alas, the talent of the Malay youth to loaf or *lepak*, is well-known.

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