

## Dr M: Sharing of power key to stability

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia continues to enjoy political stability and sustainability as the majority of its people realise the importance of the need to share and be prepared to make sacrifices. They also reject extremism.

These were some of the key success factors in developing the country, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday. He said being a multi-racial and multi-cultured nation, Malaysia has all the ingredients for instability.

"Our cultures and languages are different and we are poles apart. But somehow or rather, the Government has managed this very well, resulting in continued stability and development," he said in a speech at the fourth Perdana Discourse Series held at Perdana Leadership Foundation, of which he is the honorary president. The principle of power-sharing enabled Malaysia to remain politically stable, with leaders sensitive enough to know its importance.

"If you think this (country) is the Malays' land and we should not be sharing it with the others, the country cannot grow," Dr Mahathir said.

In order to remain stable, power-sharing must continue while extremism must be rejected.

"By and large, this is the feeling of the majority of Malaysians. Malaysians are moderate people and they are not keen to destabilise the nation, but extremists like Ayah Pin or Azahari Husin (the Malaysian shot dead for bombings in Indonesia) must be watched.

"They must not be allowed to influence the people as they can cause disunity and chaos.

"You need to have strong hands to stop people from becoming violent and you must put a stop to extremism." Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman was instrumental in promoting party coalition and spelling out the ideas of wealth and power-sharing. Coalition is indeed a better formula than a single party. We owe all this to Tunku. Nowadays, when I look at the letters where I wrote all the nasty things about Tunku... how could I be so rude to the old man? But that is politics."

Asked on the formation of the Inter-faith Commission, Dr Mahathir said: "I think it is good to enable people to discuss religious matters in a rational way. There is no way religions can be made identical. Inter-faith is very important.

"If you have strong faith, it will not change your religion. There is nothing to fear, but we must have rational people and not emotional people talking about religions."

Source: NST | [www.nst.com.my](http://www.nst.com.my)