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## Dr M: What the Chinese want

### PRESS DIGEST

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**FORMER** prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad feels that Chinese voters are concerned only about whether the government provides them with a conducive business environment and not how many minister posts are given to Chinese-based political parties.

He said no Chinese really care how many minister and deputy minister posts MCA will eventually get.

Mahathir said that when he was the premier, although the Chinese regarded him as a "Malay extremist", he ultimately had the support of the Chinese voters.

"I was able to get Chinese voters' support mainly because they felt I treated all races fairly," Mahathir was quoted as saying in an interview with *Nanyang Siang Pau* yesterday.

Asked how many Cabinet posts he thinks MCA should be allocated, the former premier said "two".

"MCA won only seven parliamentary seats. As such, it couldn't possibly get the number of Cabinet posts it has requested.

"However, I have no comment if the government decides to increase the number of Cabinet posts."

Mahathir said he personally does not believe in enlarging the Cabinet to "create job opportunities", given that the current line-up is already bigger than it was during his time.

On remarks by former finance minister Tun Daim Zainuddin that the prime minister already has too much on his plate to also be holding the finance minister's post, Mahathir opined that the premier should, and is duty-bound to, take charge of the Home Ministry, where real powers lie, instead of the Finance Ministry.

He said when he was at the helm, he chose to also hold the home minister's post. "I only took over the Finance Ministry once, because of (Datuk Seri) Anwar (Ibrahim). I believe the finance minister's post should be held by another person."