

Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	30 November 2015

Blogger: Dr M playing to the gallery

NST - 30/11/2015

'A GAME': He knows two-party system will not work in Malaysia, says Raja Petra

SYED UMAR ARIFF
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

PROMINENT political blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin has contended that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's suggestion for a two-party system was made to appease anti-establishment groups, in his campaign against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Raja Petra said Dr Mahathir knew that a two-party system in the country would not work as he had repeated in the past, since Malaysia's politics was largely pivoted by race and religion.

He advised those who thought Dr Mahathir's suggestion as sound, to

analyse his real objectives.

"To understand Dr Mahathir, you must not take what he says at any one point of time. You need to accumulate what he says over many years, in fact over many decades, and then dissect each period against the backdrop of the political developments of each of those periods.

"You will then find he is quite consistent but what makes him sound inconsistent, is because he moves the goalpost each time he wants to score a goal.

"Ultimately, he is still only interested in scoring a goal and nothing more than that," said Raja Petra in his blog on Saturday.

Raja Petra said Malaysians should be grounded by the reality that Malaysia would not fare better under a two-party system.

He added that such a system might work in other countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States, but the situation would be starkly different at home.

"One thing that the UK and the US do not need to balance in politics is race and religion. Race and religion have nothing to do with politics in the UK and the US. In Malaysia, race and religion are part and parcel of politics. You cannot separate race and religion from politics.



Raja Petra Kamarudin

"Race, religion and politics come as a package. And Dr Mahathir knows this because he has said this many times in the past. But today, he remains silent on the issue and pretends that politics is politics and has nothing to do with race and religion."

During his time as prime minister, Raja Petra said Dr Mahathir often reiterated that Malaysia could not allow absolute freedom as practised in the UK and the US.

"In fact, even in issues like democracy, freedom of speech and free-

dom of assembly, among others, Dr Mahathir has always said Malaysia cannot allow full democracy or full freedom, like the UK or the US.

"And this is the reason why Dr Mahathir has criticised Najib for abolishing detention without trial law, the Internal Security Act. Dr Mahathir feels that total democracy and absolute freedom do not work for Malaysia."

Raja Petra theorised that at a two-party system in Malaysia would result in a clash chiefly between two coalitions, separately led by Umno and DAP.



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

"So now, Dr Mahathir says Malaysia needs two strong political parties, and the opposition must be as strong as the ruling party, so that it can keep the government in check and it must be rotated between the two parties.

"What it will have instead would be two strong coalitions, comprising of many political parties. Most important of all is that one coalition will be Umno-led while the

other will be DAP-led. And the Umno-led coalition will support Article 153, the New Economic Policy and Islam, while the DAP-led coalition would be opposed to all that. So in the end, it would be a package of politics, race and religion.

"It would be a three-in-one formula all over again, one defending it and the other opposing it."

He questioned whether Dr Mahathir was serious in making the suggestion, or was playing to the gallery.

"So is Dr Mahathir for real? Is he really prepared to hand the country to a DAP-led coalition? And are those who support him and are opposed to Najib, prepared to agree to this? If they do then the first thing they need to do is to distance themselves from Pekida and Perkasa.

"But I know they will not because they know if they do, then the Malays will turn away from them. So they play the pretending game. When they speak to the non-Malays or to the middle ground, they will say one thing, but when they speak to the rural Malays they will say something else."