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Dr Mahathir gives thumbs up to Malaysia's wellbeing

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by AYU MUSA KAMAL

FORMER Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad veered away from his criticisms against Malaysia Development Bhd (IMDB) and Premier Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak yesterday as he complimented the country on doing a better job of building a more equitable multiracial society compared to most multiracial countries, including the US.

Based on a report published in American magazine *Foreign Affairs*, the elderly statesman, commented in his personal blog *chedet.cc* that, "the policy

of equality of treatment ie meritocracy, has not yielded tangible results."

"It would seem that Malaysia has done a better job of building a more equitable multiracial society than most multiracial countries including the US," he wrote.

Referring to the article, Dr Mahathir said, "There is an article on colour blindness in America — meaning to say that all Americans of whatever colours are equal. Apparently the equality between people of different colours has not produced good results. What it really means is that every thing,

including opportunities must be based on merit."

He further added, "It (the article) admitted that despite the affirmative action under the New Economic Policy (NEP), Malaysia's economy performed better than most other developing countries. The races seem to be living in relative harmony. There were no serious racial clashes.

"The affirmative action under the NEP seemed to have reduced the disparity in wealth distribution between the indigenous Malays and the Chinese. There is mention-of the Bumi-putera's owning only 2% of the

country's wealth before NEP and their wealth has now increased to 19%. The disparity is still there but is much reduced."

The veteran leader stated that India and South Africa have also tried affirmative action but pointed out that their results are not as good as in Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir stressed further that Malaysia's affirmative action has merit and just like the reversal of opinion on Malaysia's fixed exchange rate policy that there seemed to be a reversal of condemnation on Malaysia's affirmative action.

"Like the reversal of the opinion on Malaysia's fixed exchange rate policy, there now seem to be a reversal of condemnation of our affirmative action, at least by the *Foreign Affairs* magazine," he wrote.

The veteran leader also took a swipe at biased reports by foreign media on Malaysia.

"Other foreign media simply copy the biased reports made a long time ago without trying to investigate the realities regarding Malaysia's management of race relations and development of its economy," Dr Mahathir wrote.