

# Ensure country's wealth distribution is equal, PM tells staff

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**PUTRAJAYA:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has several important reminders for the staff of the Prime Minister's Department in his first address to them for 2019 – the need for equal wealth distribution, tackling poverty among all races and racial unity.

The government, he said, must see to it that the nation's wealth is distributed fairly or at least to a level acceptable to all.

“Our equal rights are only in voting and choosing the government. In terms of wealth, we don't want a nation that is rich but its wealth is not distributed fairly among races,” the Prime Minister said in his address during the department's first monthly gathering of the year.

Equally important was narrowing the poverty gap, said Dr Mahathir, who noted that the difference in some countries was so stark that it caused unrest and riots.

“If we give extra focus to the bumiputra or the Malays, it is because more of them are poor. Being in rural areas, their living conditions are unlike that of city folk where everything is readily available.

“This is what I want everyone, from politicians to civil servants and leaders, to understand. We must learn from history.

“We want to continue to maintain peace for all races to live together and ensure that the country's wealth is distributed fairly and equally,” he explained.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ismail Bakar as well as ministers and deputy ministers in the Prime Minister's Department.

While he hailed the good work of past leaders to ensure peace by putting in place an administration comprising all races, Dr Mahathir said racial unity still had some way to go, despite the nation's 61 years of independence.

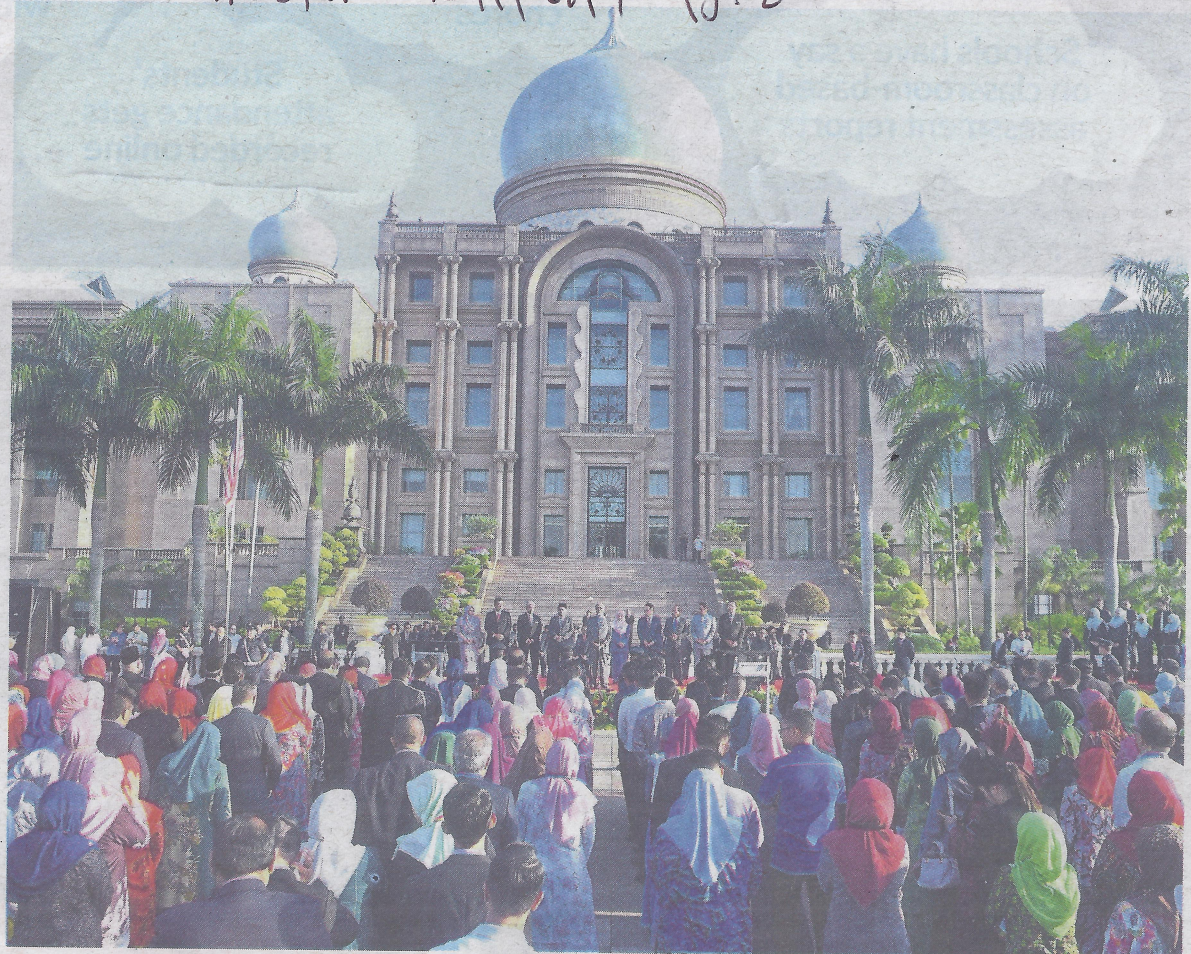
“Today, we find that races have not united as is aspired. When we achieved independence, we were hoping that we would be speaking in one language, practising one culture and living peacefully among us. But some want to maintain ties with their motherland,” he said.

He said despite racial and religious differences, there had not been any tension among its people, with the exception of the 1969 racial riot.

He urged Malaysians to come together as a harmonious society.

“The three races (Malays, Chinese and Indians) and ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak must live together, work together, play together.

“The nation can achieve more if its people are united and harmonious,” he added.



**Rapt audience:** Dr Mahathir giving his speech at the monthly gathering of the Prime Minister's Department at Putra Perdana, Putrajaya, as Dr Wan Azizah and other ministers and deputy ministers look on. — Bernama

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