

Dr M should be ashamed of his rhetoric, says Santiago

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Klang member of parliament Charles Santiago yesterday slammed former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad over racially insensitive remarks made at a press conference on Wednesday.

In a series of tweets, Santiago hit out at Dr Mahathir for what he said was another desperate attempt to "stay relevant".

Dr Mahathir had claimed that the non-Malays wanted to change the country's name and "ownership", and that there were alleged attempts by those in other countries to change Malaysia from a "Tanah Melayu" into a multiracial country.

"Need a 101 guide on how to desperately try to be relevant? Look no further than Dr Mahathir's assertions on vague foreigners trying to change the country's name. If anything, it's Dr Mahathir who is trying to distort history," tweeted Santiago.

"Non-Malays have contributed

equally to the development of this country. They were offered citizenship, which they accepted. Every Malaysian therefore has equal rights to this country as its ours.

"It (Malaysia) does not belong to a selected few."

Santiago said Dr Mahathir was spinning a yarn to shore up support for his new allies ahead of the state elections.

However, he said, the venom spewed by Mahathir was hate speech that could be explosive.

"We are a multiracial country and a land made up of migrants. We are a melting pot of different cultures and traditions.

"It is, therefore, totally unbecoming of Dr Mahathir to stir racial tension... but (it is) not surprising.

"The rhetoric clearly shows how dangerous and divisive Dr Mahathir is to our country.

"He ought to be ashamed of himself," he said.