

DR M: INDIANS, CHINESE NOT FULLY LOYAL TO MALAYSIA

Former Klang MP slams ex-PM, saying he should be ashamed of himself for such venom'

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TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad believes Malaysian Indians and Chinese are not completely loyal to the country as they still want to identify with their "countries of origin".

In an interview with Chennai-based satellite television channel Thanthi TV, former prime minister Dr Mahathir, 98, said he stood by his past remarks that Malaysia belonged to the people who founded the country.

"There are people who consider themselves Indians or Chinese. They do not speak the local language at all.

"They have their own schools, their own language, their own culture.

"So they are different from the original people who founded this country," he said in the interview, which was uploaded to Thanthi TV's YouTube channel on Thursday.

To a question from the host, who said Malaysian Indians and Chinese were still loyal to the country, Dr Mahathir said: "Not completely. They want to identify themselves with their countries of origin."



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad speaking to the Thanthi TV host. Two members of parliament have taken Dr Mahathir to task for his 'hate-filled rants'. SCREENGAB FROM THANTHI TV'S YOUTUBE VIDEO

Later, the host said apart from speaking Tamil, Malaysian Indians spoke Malay very well and were committed to Malaysia.

"Malaysian Indians do not speak Malay as their home language. They speak Tamil," said Dr Mahathir.

When the host asked Dr Mahathir what the problem was with Malaysian Indians who did not speak Malay as their home language, he said: "The problem is that they cannot be assimilated.

"There are people of many different origins in America who have forgotten their own language, who speak only English and they do not claim to be citizens except in America."

Dr Mahathir was also asked if Malaysian Indians and Chinese should completely shun their religion and practices to behave like Malays to assimilate.

He said: "Yes, many of them have done that. Many people of Indian origin, Arab origin, even European origin, who are now completely Malay, they practise Malay all the time, they practise Malay customs and tradition."

When the host told Dr Mahathir that the Constitution allowed people of all races to practise their culture and religion, he said: "The Constitution does not say that they should set up their own party confined only to their own people."

The host asked Dr Mahathir why he did not raise this issue with MIC and MCA when he was Umno president.

"Yes, under my leadership, I am prepared to work with other people, but not prepared to accept them as the owners of this country," he said.

Two former members of par-

liament took Dr Mahathir to task for what they described as "hate-filled rants" about Malaysian Indians and Chinese.

Former Klang member of parliament Charles Santiago said both the Indian and Chinese communities had contributed to Malaysia's socio-economic and political development.

He said Dr Mahathir should be "ashamed of himself for such venom".

"Mahathir's comments are divisive and harmful in a multiracial society like ours," Santiago said in a post on X.

He accused Dr Mahathir of undoing his positive contributions in the past with his comments.

"He knows this is incitement. He is also encouraging bigotry and hate. But he doesn't care about the consequences of his actions.

"Is he trying desperately to stay relevant? Especially in his twilight years? Then he must know we are fed up with his hate-filled rants. Malaysia doesn't belong to a select few, but to all Malaysians."

Santiago urged the authorities to take action against Dr Mahathir for making divisive statements that were potentially harmful in a multiracial society.

Former Batu Kawan member of parliament Kasthuri Patto said Dr Mahathir should be "the last person to talk about loyalty".

"He should be the last person to speak about what loyalty means and especially about roots and heritage.

"I am a proud and loyal Malaysian, and unlike you, I work hard to see Malaysia at her best. You were the setback we never deserved," she wrote on X.