

Dr M: Malaysia can't afford a minority government

The Malaymail Online

January 06, 2014

BY JOSEPH SIPALAN

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 6 — Malaysia cannot survive if its government is run by one race alone, Tun Dr Mahathir said today as he observed the tide of public sentiment from the minorities ebbing further away from the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN).

The former prime minister stressed the need to reinstate the power-sharing formula he insisted has been the mainstay of the BN coalition since Independence.

“I think the parties in the BN should be reminded that this is a multiracial country and it can only remain peaceful and prosperous if they uphold this ideal of sharing between the races,” he said in the latest posting on his chedet blog.

The 88-year-old noted that unlike other countries with multi-racial populations that are “almost never peaceful”, Malaysia has remained united and financially resilient over the past five decades as its people believed in sharing political power and economic wealth.

Dr Mahathir said the country will only suffer if the opposition are successful in doing away with the BN's tried and tested formula, as it will only alienate the majority Malays in the interest of allowing the Chinese to dominate the country's economics and politics.

“The Malays must remember that they cannot rule and prosper this country on their own. They need the dynamism and business skills of the Chinese. They need also the professional skills of the Indians.

“The Chinese and Indians must also realise that they need Malay support if they wish to form a Government in Malaysia. And Malay support will not be forthcoming if the Chinese and Indians are not prepared to share and share fairly political power and economic wealth.

"In multiracial Malaysia, a strong Government is a necessity. We cannot afford a minority Government," he said.

Southeast Asia's third-largest economy continues to reel from the effects of fractious national polls last May, which saw the 13-party BN retain federal power, albeit by a diminished parliamentary majority besides losing the popular vote to the DAP-PKR-PAS opposition bloc.

BN lynchpin Umno — which represents Malay Muslim interests in the ruling coalition — won 88 out of the coalition's 133 seats against Pakatan Rakyat's 89 seats in the 222-member Dewan Rakyat.

BN co-founding party, MCA — which represents the coalition's Chinese face — however, secured only seven seats, fewer than half of the 15 seats it won in Election 2008.

The results are seen to have driven a wedge between Malaysia's dominant Malay community and its sizeable Chinese and Indian groups, more so after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak blamed a “Chinese tsunami” for BN's worst polls outing yet.

Dr Mahathir, the country's longest-serving prime minister, today blamed the opposition bloc, and singled out the DAP for the Chinese community's "wholesale desertion" of BN, claiming the ethnic voters were attracted by the promise of total control of the country's economy and politics.

"Fortunately, the majority of Malays adhered to the sharing concept espoused by the BN. And so, despite this desertion the BN won, but won with a much thinner majority.

"The fact that the contribution to this victory is largely by Malays and other indigenous people reflects a rejection of the concept of inter-racial sharing by non-Malays," he said.

The veteran politician, who still wields considerable clout in the country and within Umno, acknowledged that BN's power-sharing formula needed some "adjustments", but stressed that it should not be done through threats or demonstrations that would only end up scuttling such improvements.

He said the "sharing formula" has been instrumental in bringing development and prosperity to Malaysia, and by many accounts has been a beacon of peace, stability and prosperity even in the face of global recessions.

"Only the insane can think that Malaysia should have the kind of upheavals, demonstrations and the like that we see in the countries of the Middle East and elsewhere. Maybe we are not perfect but that is no reason why we should discard something that had largely delivered on its promise.

"But the will of the people must be expressed through elections, not through demonstrations or other means," he said, adding that there is no merit to claims of cheating by the BN as the opposition has managed to wrest power in several states.

Copyright © 2013 The Malaymail Online (Malaysia) Berhad.

Sources: <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/dr-m-malaysia-cant-afford-a-minority-government>