

## **Analysts hail Dr M's call on power-sharing**

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PETALING JAYA, Jan 9 — Political analysts were in agreement over former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call that adjustments could be made to the Barisan Nasional's (BN) power-sharing formula to woo Malaysians who deserted the ruling coalition in the last general election.

In a posting on his Chedet blog, Dr Mahathir reminded the Malays they could not rule and prosper on their own as they needed the business skills of the Chinese and the professional skills of the Indians.

Prof Dr Aruna Gopinath lauded Dr Mahathir's suggestion as it would demonstrate Malaysia was a progressive nation.

"We need to show the world that Malaysia is progressive and dynamic regardless of race, creed or religion," she said.

"We want to tap the best resources, as well as minds, that can share their expertise. To achieve this, we must show we are inclusive to various communities."

Dr Azmi Sharom, an associate professor at Universiti Malaya's Law Faculty said what Dr Mahathir had posted was pure "common sense".

Political analyst and activist Wong Chin Huat suggested that BN should democratise itself and stand for human rights rather than simply profess to be moderate and accommodating.

"Malaysians of this generation want democracy so that our differences and conflicts can be handled in a rational manner," he said.

"Dr Mahathir made no mention of improved democracy and human rights. While he may notice the symptoms of the present situation, he failed to recognise the root cause."

Dr Mahathir said Malay support would not be forthcoming if the Chinese and Indians were not prepared to fairly share political power and economic wealth.

"In multi-racial Malaysia, a strong government is a necessity. We cannot afford a minority government. Having tried to stop sharing in the 2013 election, those who deserted the BN should come back. They should return to the status quo ante," he wrote.

"Multi-racial countries are almost never peaceful. More so if the races follow different religions, speak different languages and adhere to different cultures as in Malaysia.

"But contrary to general expectations, Malaysia is relatively peaceful and stable. It is accordingly more prosperous than can be expected of countries which gained independence recently."

Dr Mahathir said the reason for peace in the country was the willingness of the people to share political power and economic wealth.

“Unfortunately, there are in this country people who wish to end this sharing concept. They see a possibility of dominating not just economic wealth but political power as well,” he said.

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