

Giving in to Pakatan on Sedition Act will weaken Barisan, says Dr Mahathir
Malaysian Insider
June 18, 2014
By Anisah Shukry

Barisan Nasional's (BN) move to give in once again to the opposition's demands by replacing the Sedition Act is a mistake that would only anger its supporters, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed said today.

"Apparently the government is still bent on pleasing the opposition rather than government's supporters," Dr Mahathir wrote in his latest blog posting.

"There is now a move to accede to the opposition demands for meritocracy. Three laws are to replace the Sedition Act which will have the effect of ending the affirmation Action of the New Economic Policy (NEP)."

He said BN had apparently not learned from its past mistakes, and cited the Internal Security Act (ISA) which was repealed after opposition from Pakatan Rakyat (PR).

"The opposition never said 'thank you' or praised the liberalism of the government. Certainly they would not support the government because it had met their demand.

"The attack against the government continued. And the result was the performance of the government party becoming worse than when the ISA was in the statute books," wrote Dr Mahathir.

He said BN supporters saw the ruling coalition as weak and withdrew their support after it complied with PR over the ISA, which allowed police to detain suspects without trial.

"In the case of the ISA the law enforcers too felt they have been betrayed. The crime rate grows and the security people get the blame. The people will also feel betrayed and angry with the rise of crime rates.

"The government has gained nothing and has lost a lot from trying to please the Opposition. Has the government learnt the lesson?" he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the government gained nothing from complying with Pakatan as the opposition was only bent on taking over Putrajaya.

“The objective of the opposition is to bring down the government and to take over. They are not really interested in issues or the wrong things the government is doing. These issues are good only for blackening the governing party so as to bring it down.”

He said Pakatan would still not support the government nor allow their supporters to turn to BN even if it acceded to PR’s demands.

“They will either belittle the government’s decision or they will come up with new issues,” he wrote.

The National Unity Consultation Council had submitted three draft bills to replace the contentious Sedition Act, which critics said was used to quell dissent among opposition politicians and supporters.

The three draft bills are the proposed National Harmony Bill, National Unity Bill and the National Unity and Integration Commission Bill.

Dr Mahathir had previously criticised the proposed laws, saying they would cause inequality among Malaysia’s three major ethnic communities.

This is because the new laws would end discrimination based on ethnicity and introduce the principle of meritocracy in giving out government contracts, jobs and university scholarships, he said.

Dr Mahathir said that after the three Acts are passed by Parliament, the NEP, which is supposed to reduce economic inequality between races, cannot be implemented any longer.

He said that the NEP was still necessary because of the different economic achievements of different communities. – June 18, 2014.

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