

**Dr M calls for inclusiveness, sensitivity to diverse electorate**  
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**By Ram Anand**

Malaysia is not just a "Malay-Islamic" country, says Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad who wants more inclusiveness and for the government to be sensitive to the diverse electorate.

In a prologue written in his latest book, a collection of his letters to world leaders, the country's longest serving prime minister said: "We are an Islamic country with a Muslim majority. So we should set a good example by being understanding, emphatic and inclusive.

"The leadership must be sensitive to the latest political temperatures of the diverse electorate. Failure to do so will result in the ruling party losing by default," he said in the prologue signed on March 11.

He said during his time, he never succumbed to "every wish and whim of the majority race, or that of the economically strong community."

His words come at a time when racial and religious divide in the country is growing, as there is a rise of Malay-Muslim right-wing non-governmental organisations.

Recently, a group of 50 protested in front of a church in Taman Medan over its use of a cross in the building facade, saying the cross should be visible in an area with a Muslim-Malay majority.

"Dr Mahathir's Selected Letters to World Leaders: Volume Two", edited by Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad, is being launched today at the Perdana Leadership Foundation.

Dr Mahathir also said that populism in any guise was "unsustainable", warning against leaders who appealed to a certain populace when it "suits him".

"Pork barrel politics is defensible but bribery in any form – as a means of making certain that enough voters keep the ruling party in power – is not proper," Dr Mahathir said.

However, he said that he believed he had not left Malaysia in a "lamentable" state.

"The prerequisite for greater success is to embrace the talents of all Malaysians while giving due regard to the vital ground rules of Malaysian politics as embodied in the constitution," he said.

"This foundation document, on which the country is built, protects and upholds the basic rights of all Malaysians."

Dr Mahathir coincidentally had the first volume of his letters to world leaders

published at a time when he was campaigning for the resignation of Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, his successor as prime minister, seven years ago.

Dr Mahathir is currently calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, after being critical of Najib's leadership. – May 18, 2015.

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