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# Dr M: Study proposals carefully

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Effects of direct membership to BN or creating another post must be considered, says ex-PM

**PUTRAJAYA:** Barisan Nasional must study carefully the effects of proposals such as direct membership to the coalition or having a deputy chairmanship for MCA before implementing them.

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said such a study would also have to take into account the role of Umno, MCA or MIC within the society, now that times had changed after the March 8 general election.

"Barisan is a coalition of various race-based parties. If it merely gives in to the demands of one race or party, then the others won't be happy.

"The coalition needs the support of all races and parties. So if there is such a pro-

posal, members will have to think about the implications whether it will further distance or attract the support of the Malays or other races.

"We are a multi-racial society so we have to be careful," he told reporters after speaking at the Global Peace Festival at a hotel here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said if the coalition should only decide according to the wishes of one race, this was likely to be the wrong decision as the Chinese population might have other grouses against MCA.

"Whatever that is detrimental to Barisan is detrimental to the Chinese community.

"Barisan is a system that protects the inter-

ests of all races fairly.

"So, it has to think about this and get data before implementing such proposals," he pointed out.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on MCA Youth's call for the creation of a second Barisan deputy chairman's post, which would be held by the party as the second largest component party.

He also agreed with Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin that the current campaigning period for the party polls was too long as both the Government and Barisan had to deal with winning back their voters and a looming economic crisis at the same time.

**»The coalition needs the support of all races and parties«**



TUN DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD