

## Support for NEP coming from ‘captive minds’, says Ku Li

Written by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah  
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 1 — Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah resumed his attack on the New Economic Policy (NEP) today, stating that “captive minds” continue to support it despite Malaysia moving further from its objective of redistributing wealth through pro-Bumiputera policies.

The Umno veteran said there has been “no intellectual inquiry” into why “despite many years of implementing the NEP, inequitable distribution of income continues to plague the people” as “we have become incapable of devising an analytical method independent of current stereotypes about Malays, Chinese, Indians and others.”

Ku Li today said, “...The NEP...has produced results that are diametrically opposed to the original intention of bridging the gap between the haves and the have-nots.” — file pic

“If the doctor keeps on prescribing the same medicine which produces opposite results, then something must be wrong with the doctor, and something more serious must be wrong with the patient who keeps on trusting the same doctor.

“Our thinking is based completely on a racial world view when it comes to matters of politics, education, economics, planning, and so forth. Needless to say, we promote a racial world view that thrives on the policy of divide and rule,” the Kelantan prince said at a book launch in Ipoh this morning.

Tengku Razaleigh, popularly known as Ku Li, had in February said “as a former finance minister, let me emphasise that it was never the intention of the NEP to create an incubated class of Malay capitalists.”

His statement further fuelled scrutiny of former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad’s policies after the Najib administration decided to settle out of court the RM589 million debt owed by former Malaysia Airline System Bhd (MAS) chief Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli.

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The settlement sum was undisclosed, prompting intense public criticism and attacks from the opposition over the right of taxpayers to know the amount of public funds recovered.

Tajudin, 65, had served as the airline's executive chairman from 1994 to 2001 and was a poster boy of former finance minister Tun Daim Zainuddin's now-discredited policy of nurturing a class of Malay corporate captains on government largesse during the Mahathir administration.

Ku Li, one of the greatest critics of the NEP and Dr Mahathir's handling of the policy, had challenged the long-serving prime minister for leadership of Umno in 1987, which he subsequently lost by a narrow margin.

He said in his speech today that the country's education system does "not encourage the moral and intellectual reform of the mind" resulting in a lack of debate on major issues such as good governance, corruption and rule of law.

"To this very day, the electorate has not understood the implications of the NEP which has produced results that are diametrically opposed to the original intention of bridging the gap between the haves and the have-nots. The longer we try the policy, the further we are from the original goal.

"The discrepancy between vision and reality has taken an alarming turn. It has gone far beyond economics into the realm of ethics and morality. In numerous instances it has taken the form of corruption and decadence which has pushed the economy further down the drain," he said.

He said "wanton corruption and wasteful spending" had resulted in spiralling national debt that now amounts to RM456 billion or 53 per cent of the GDP, which "if we are not careful, it won't take us long before we become another Greece."

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