

Letter**Letter: Malaysia's former leader lost the public's confidence**

From Prof Eduard J Bomhoff, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Your editorial ("[Malaysia requires a transparent transition](#)", March 11) concludes with the urgent need for a parliamentary vote of confidence in the new government. But new prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin has anticipated such a vote by expanding the government, so that 62 MPs (out of 222) have ministerial jobs, access to large governmental allowances and additional employment for their personal assistants.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim has admitted that not enough potential waverers are left. The vote of confidence is a lost cause.

The outgoing government made at least two major errors. Prime minister Mahathir Mohamad was out of the country for more than 30 official overseas trips in less than two years, including long-distance visits to Senegal and Ghana, which kept him from steering his home country. This is especially regrettable in a political culture where the prime minister holds forth and has to sign off on everything.

Also, the government did nothing to shift public opinion away from anger about the cost of living as the main issue in politics. Hard for any government to lower the price level in the short-term. Mr Mahathir's government could have been more popular with strong initiatives to increase incomes, extend insurance for unemployment and disability, and improve access to education for the ethnic minorities.

Prof Eduard J Bomhoff

Monash University,

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

