

TOWN HALL
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1. Kit Siang and I had a most interesting session with about 200 young Malaysians who wanted to hear answers to their questions. We on the other hand, wanted to know what is bugging them.
2. They asked very intelligent questions but were a little disappointing because they were mainly about past alleged misdeeds of the BN Governments. There was hardly any reference to the present and the future. The main focus was on Ops Lalang.
3. On corruption the assumption seems to be that any new Government would do all the things that Najib has done and is doing as long as the systems remain the same. There seems to be a belief that if the system is right then everything will be fine.
4. Merely changing the Government would not result in the Prime Minister lose his great power and his corruption.
5. The implication seems to be that voting in the election would not resolve the problems facing the country. This being so voting would be an exercise in futility.
6. In other words let the present Government continue, let Najib be the Prime Minister. It reflects the aphorism "better the devil you know than the angel you don't".
7. Against this the opposition coalition's efforts will come to naught especially with many young Malaysians. The coalition is prejudged as guilty before the fact.
8. It may seem strange that young Malaysians see no difference between the past and the present. But then our perception of things is based on what we see around us in our lifetime and not before we are born.
9. The old were born when Malaysia was a European colony or in the early years of independence. The young see Malaysia not only quite long after independence, but after the country has already developed much. The perceptions of the old and young are therefore different.
10. The perception of young Malaysians is that corruption in the Malaysian Independent Governments of the past is no different from the corruption of Najib's Government of today. Change that brings back the Government of the past therefore represent no change at all.
11. The old on the other hand see the difference between the old and the new. They see that in the past no one categorised Malaysia as among the ten most corrupt countries in the world as it is now. No one called Malaysia a kleptocracy. No one was worried about national debt reaching one trillion Ringgit. No one talked of the abuses of power and the stealing of billions of Ringgit by the Prime Minister of the country. There was no 1MDB scandal and no 2.6 billion Ringgit in the PM's account.
12. Instead they saw Malaysia was among the tigers of Asia, the best developed of the developing countries emerging after freedom from colonial rule, the model for the developing world and many other accolades.

13. The old see these; see the differences between then and now. The old yearn for what by comparison were the good years of the past.

14. For the young the years of the past were nothing to be proud about. Of course the country must develop. Of course life would be good. These were normal. Every country must be so.

15. But there was corruption. There was the ISA. There were detentions without trial. There were censorship and restrictions on press freedom.

16. All these would remain even if a new Government is in place. Even if promises are made that these will be amended or abolished, what guarantee is there that these will be done. The systems would still be there. And there is no guarantee a new Prime Minister with a new Government will not steal money, corrupt the people and abuse his power.

17. This difference in the perceptions of old and young need to be recognised and appreciated if the aspiring challengers against Najib wish to mobilise youths to help in the attempt to overthrow Najib and his kleptocratic Government.

18. The future belongs to these young Malaysians. Their refusal to help change the Government will be very detrimental to them.

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