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Foolish for MPs to let voters down

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FOOLS, as the saying goes, never learn. A fool keeps repeating his mistakes. He does not learn from past experience.

A fool, however, is not necessarily a dull person or a person with any kind of mental incapacity. He can be a person of perfect mind. It is his foolish action that makes him a fool. We can say that such a person does not use his otak (brain) very well.

But they are not the kind of fools who were found in the mediaeval households whose task was to keep their masters amused. The fools we are talking about are normal people who are prone to acting foolishly.

We can live with their foolishness as such behaviour causes problems or embarrassment only to themselves.

But when they are as important as Members of Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies, their foolery affects others. This, I am sure, not too many people will take kindly to.

We do not want our elected representatives to act foolishly as it amounts to making fools of us.

But what better word is there to describe the action of some of our MPs who absent themselves from this week's first sitting of the 10th Parliament? Foolish is the word.

Only a fool would act in such a manner weeks after being elected to the august chamber in what was easily the most keenly fought general election this decade.

This is especially true for the Barisan MPs whose numbers are fewer and whose victories were mostly by narrow margins.

Alas, despite the hard-won battle, some of the Yang Berhormats, judging by the events of the last few days, have neither learnt a lesson nor shown sufficient regard for the people who voted for them.

This is not a clever thing to do for a fool believes that he can fool the voters.

Although the rules of the Dewan allow members to be absent, the reason and justification for it must be sufficiently strong.

So for some MPs to be absent so soon after being sworn-in or for not attending the session regularly is plain foolish. It is simply inexcusable.

It appears that the situation on the Government Bench was serious enough to prompt the Prime Minister to warn the Barisan Nasional MPs that they would be dropped at the next general election if they did not perform well.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said BN officials were watching them closely, especially with regard to attendance and debates.