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Jeering all right for football fans but not politicians in Parliament

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I READ the NST report on the failed attempt by the Opposition front to defer the tabling of the Third Outlook Perspective Plan (OPP) in Parliament recently with a feeling of disappointment and worry, to say the least.

Disappointment because, after being an independent country for 43 years and after going through a historic series of peaceful democratic elections since independence, the Opposition front still seems to be in its own cocoon and has never matured since.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech on the Third OPP was right on target when it stated that all the Opposition knows is that it must oppose the Government's ideas no matter what the idea might be.

It is only a logical conclusion that if the Government had succumbed to every criticism from the Opposition on many prior occasions, a lot of positive developments for the country would not have materialised.

Even before the plans are laid out for debate they had to oppose the initial process of tabling, stating insufficient time to digest the reports as a reason.

That the Deputy Speaker mentioned and reasoned they will have ample time to debate later is not taken positively. Instead, they created a ruckus and managed to delay the tabling from taking place for 10 minutes.

One tends to wonder whether they actually like to do this just for the fun of delaying every major session in Parliament, including the tabling of the Budget last year.

As a voting citizen, I understand and acknowledge the fact of having an Opposition front in Parliament is for check and balance purposes. I am not even trying to advocate that all Government actions are always right but at the same time I also acknowledge the fact that Malaysia needs a strong Government with a comfortable majority to administer efficiently.

Having said that, it is also evident that the Malaysian people have always voted for a strong Government and at the same time chosen to maintain the voice of the Opposition.

What does this mean? It means that the people generally understand that a strong Government is important but, nevertheless, expect that the Opposition exists in the system to provide the check and balance mechanism needed and also contribute to the development of the country with constructive criticisms so that Malaysia will always have good governance for the people's benefit.

It is, however, essential that counter-proposals to ideas should be supplemented with better ideas or points of view and not sarcastic jeers. It is all right for football fans to do that at matches, but not politicians, and obviously not in Parliament.

Why is it worrying then? It is worrying because the Opposition that we, the people, elected in Parliament only seems to strive on one aim - that is, to topple the present Government - and sometimes it seems (from their websites, dailies, ceramah, etc) just to smear Dr Mahathir and topple him.

As this seems to be their common aim, we get all sorts of action taken merely for political mileage and what is worse is some of these are actions that can bring serious negative and dangerous repercussions to the man on the street, such as demonstrations, hate campaigns, religious extremism and baseless accusations.

If this is the kind of Opposition that we advocate and expect from our

politicians, what kind of governance can we expect for the country in future if they get their wish to rule?