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Seeking self-empowerment

By S.B.

I REFER to "No stopping winds of change from blowing now" (NST, May 23). In aggregate, the recent announcements by the Prime Minister are indicative of a dilution of power and influence away from the chief executive.

This loosening of the reins is perhaps one of the most significant developments brought about by the present occupant of Sri Perdana.

With the re-establishment of the select committees, the Government is signalling a more porous decision-making process in the running of the country.

The newly announced changes hopefully will bring about a new era of self-empowerment, not only among the general populace but in the principal parts of the machinery that run the ship of state.

We want to know that we have some effective influence in the life of the country and that not everything is dependent on the political.

Maybe there will be less kissing of the hands of Cabinet members and not having hundreds at the airport to wave the Prime Minister goodbye every time he goes away.

The politicians, on the other hand, must cease to condescend in their manner and speech: "Minister hits out at youth".

One does not hit the hand that votes. "Minister says the rakyat must work hard".

Need he be reminded that he is not a ruler but rakyat himself? Political pomp and circumstance with elaborate costumed processions should be banned. It only encourages an event organiser to score brownie points.

What makes a truly great leader is not the building of monuments and great edifices but the changing of mindsets and mental culture. Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad gave us dignity and self-pride.

The next stage is for us to build on that legacy and add substance to this veneer of self-confidence.

The incumbent administration will be judged on its embarkation and management of this seismic shift of power and influence. It requires careful calibration. God willing, it will be the catalyst for a culture of listening ears and a society of critical thinking voices.

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