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Toxic culture of chronic whiners

WHAT is the typical reaction when we meet someone who always seems to complain, complain, complain? We eventually become weary of such behaviour because no one likes to be around people who are always critical and ungrateful. It is, therefore, not surprising that after 22 years as Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is tired of those Malaysians who complain about everything the Government does.

Sometimes, complainers have something of merit to say and genuine complaints can be a good source of feedback to the Government. Most of us whinge at one time or another. But chronic complainers are a different breed - they absolve themselves of responsibility by putting the blame on others.

These experts in dissatisfaction are negative and look at everything in a bad light. They are devotees of the derogatory arts who are always finding fault, putting other people down, and judging all others except themselves. They are impossible to win over. Like their patron saint, Moaning Myrtle in the Harry Potter books, who, even after she dies, spends all eternity complaining, they would find things wrong even in paradise.

Like Bruce in the movie Bruce Almighty, who complains to God when everything goes wrong with him, they think they can do a better job if they had the chance. Like Bruce, who messes up his own life and also the whole world when God takes a vacation and leaves him in charge, these naysayers will find that it's easy to find fault, but not so easy to find a solution. They rarely make the leap from identifying problems to coming up with meaningful solutions.

Complaining is not a harmless pastime. The danger is that there are far too many people who are willing to listen to such habitual whiners. The negativity of constant complaining carries a toxic element, which creates a climate of hopelessness and despair.

A great danger is posed by those who seem to look for reasons to complain, to be discontented, to be ungrateful. We need people with a passion for living, not chronic grouchers whose petty resentments vitiate life. The more such positive people there are, the better it is for the nation's progress and prosperity.