

BN regime unaccountable to the people
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I refer to the letter Gov't not showing empathy with common man where the writer reiterated that the government should empathise with common folk and instead of dismissing their complaints.

The fact that the people have to resort to peaceful street protests is a reflection that the government has not provided a response to their complaints and has not provided a forum in which such complaints and grouses can be heard in a civilised manner. In addition, the public are also not given access to review any of the toll agreements with the highway operators..

The writer also said that the government should be more attuned to the public or voters lest they 'abandon ship'.

My response to the writer is, sadly, a pessimistic one. The Barisan Nasional government has turned into a regime, a regime that is unaccountable to the people. How would you explain a government that does not give scant regard to the public whose main lament is simply that the rising cost of living and the effects of the one-sided agreements with the monopolistic toll concessionaires are unfair to them.

The very nature of a regime is that it does not answer to the public. As it is, the check and balance system of a democratic society is not applicable here. The Election Commission is not an independent commission, voting fraud is common. Whistle-blowers and protesters are beaten and detained without trial just to stifle opposition and to allow the ruling party a free rein to abuse their power for personal gain.

I am sure the honourable Works Minister will be reelected at his Sungai Siput parliamentary constituency come the next election. No amount of hue and cry will prevent this, as he has the 'means' to bypass the workings of a democratic society.

But let this humble writer - who is nothing more than an ordinary Malaysian - remind him that his is a public office, and he has a duty to respond to the public. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln, the government should be of the people, for the people and by the people.

Sadly, this is not the case in Malaysia. Not even close.

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