

Breaking apart rock logic
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The Langkawi International Dialogue (LID) is what is labelled a "smart partnership" between the Southern members of the United Nations.

Under its aegis, the government also launched Malaysia's Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), through which thousands of citizens from the developing world came to Malaysia to be trained in our many development institutions. Within the same agenda, Malaysia Airlines was directed to fly to Johannesburg and Brazil, rather than going through traditional routes like Paris or London.

After these creative tactics helped reinvent the worldview of then-mainstream Malaysians, the country is now considered a faster developing new nation and a model of better governance.

Unfortunately though, Malaysia's leadership has since fossilised, forgetting that most developed countries did not get "developed" by sitting under durian trees and waiting for the fruits to drop.

While we desire to begin that new dialogue, we still lack an updated worldview. This column is therefore inspired by two unrelated columns in The Star last Thursday by Azmi Sharom and Dennis Ignatius. They each discussed related issues. What do I mean?

Any new dialogue needs a newer paradigm: about what is the nature of nature, what is life, what is the meaning of life, what is the problem in life, and how can we engage life with all its challenges?

Any such systematic way of thinking about life and for life can be called a worldview.

In Malaysia, we have somehow not been able to transition from the older paradigm of power and control into a paradigm of responsibility and accountability.

The older paradigm has roots in our feudalistic and traditional ways of life. For example, in Malaysia witchcraft is still in demand. The traditional belief is that these "agents of the spirit world" can actually bring relief to whatever is the source or cause of the problem one faces by applying various mantras. Those who demand such services are sometimes healed and other times cheated.

In pure and true Abrahamic worldviews, such a belief in human sources to reorder the spirit world is not entirely acceptable outside the absolute power of the Creator, making witchcraft in any form taboo.

Idiocracy by law

Yet, within Malaysia, government spokespersons are quagmired within the older rock logic of feudalistic and archaic thinking. How else can the Minister of Home Affairs declare that it is "illegal" to wear a Bersih T-shirt?

Though Hishammuddin Hussein (right) is a lawyer, he is also illogical, if I did not misread or misunderstand him. Let me develop his logic system to establish the pure 'idiocracy.'

1. A rally is illegal in Malaysia under a state of emergency, wherein any gathering of more than four is a crowd and therefore "not a well-intentioned group." This consequential logic is a denial of the right of assembly guaranteed by the constitution.

2. The IGP and home affairs minister have therefore decreed the soon to be Bersih rally as "illegal" and have started arresting those who have any intention to commit a crime. That's current arrest for future crime.

3. Such intent can be demonstrated by anyone who plans to march or communicates any desire to

march, and especially those who provoke or promote the rally. Therefore, intention to march is a crime.

4. The next step down this slippery slope in idiocratic logic is that anyone in possession of a Bersih T-shirt is considered in possession of an illegal weapon and therefore can be arrested. T-shirts are now criminal weapons.

5. A dangerous next step would be: if you dream about the Bersih rally, you will also be arrested for having illegal dreams with bad intentions. After all, intentions are actions in this bokehland. How does any system allow people with such idiotic thinking to become Ministers?

I remember the day 'Kerismuddin' came to report for work at Miti as a parliamentary secretary. He was humble, simple and sincere and asked us, as government officers, to help him to learn the new job.

We all replied that we gladly would. But today he does not appear to have learned very much about good and able governance.

Malaysian Spring approaching?

The current logic of the GoM is that only institutional heads at the top of the pyramid - whether sultan or minister - know everything, while those who are below or outside of the system of governance do not know very much; and that surely includes us, the "stupid rakyat".

Such rock logic of mainstream power systems has created waves of change within the Arab Spring, where leaders were developed not through rock logic but rather water logic: a fluid method that defines its own level of new leadership whenever the group faces new challenges. The bigger the challenges, the better they self-organise.

Therefore, dear minister, you can only lose your job at the rate of translation of your rock logic. Even your cousin cannot preserve your job when the Malaysian Spring emerges. The issues are real. The ripples are churning into tidal waves of change.

Today any truly smart partnership must always involve all three parties of good governance: the public, private, and civil society sectors. That is the sustainable worldview that the corporate social responsibility movement promotes worldwide.

The IGP should be simply directed to watch and protect the public from any kind of real dangers. Otherwise they are set up to act against their citizens, who are really their bosses too.

As with any police force in the world that acts to injure or harm unarmed citizens, their days are numbered and the authorities are in even greater danger. Please be educated and read the writing on the wall.

KJ JOHN was in public service for 29 years. The views expressed here are personal views of the writer and not those of the university or any other institution he is involved with. Please write to the columnist at kjohn@ohmsi.net, if you have any feedback or views.