

**BN may die if it doesn't move with the times**  
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These past three years, BN has been fast sliding down the road of political survival.

Hence today it is very evident that BN has gone on the defensive with the 'opposition' coalition party having the advantage. Why?

The problem is the leaders and power brokers within the BN army have been operating from an outdated mindset for far too long.

They have failed to grasp the revolution taking place within societies with Malaysia being no exception in this globalising and networked society.

Civil society, through the liberating technologies of the new-age millennium, has increasingly harnessed the power of democratic governance.

Our leaders have failed to take cognizance of the fact that society is "being changed from arborial beings, rooted in time and space, to rhizomic nomads who daily wonder at will without necessarily moving (their) bodies at all" (Mark Poster, 1990).

When governments and leaders fail to recognise and accept the fast changing landscape of socio-political fundamentals, civil society pours into the streets.

Its action cannot be curtailed by the age-old means of threats, arrests, punishment and absolute controls.

The more you take as prisoners and kill, the more will rise like a tidal wave. Time remains the defining factor.

Our leaders and their ill informed advisors need to know that what we are witnessing around the world today are the advantages of "cybernations evolving ... people sharing an interest, exchanging information and possibly arranging to meet with one another ... on a global basis (providing) the distant village dweller the opportunity to make contact with any person, anywhere in the world" (Rolf Jensen, 1999).

And throughout the history of humanity, we have ample attestation to prove that when people come together, systems fall apart, and resurrect a new framework to help propel that society onward.

BN had the disadvantage of being in a comfort zone for far too long. Whether it will be able to restructure itself to face the already changing Malaysian society is the million-ringgit question.

Given BN's political warfare tactics, it appears that transformation is quiet unlikely within its own yard.

For as long as it continues to keep reinforcing itself with the justifications, admonishments and smear tactics focusing on race, religion and sex, it is bound to sink even further.

BN leaders (past and current) continue to live in a self-denial mode. They keep clamoring that the 'opposition' with its 'pack of lies' is hurting BN and misleading people.

This clearly tells us that BN is blinded to the truth about networked society

In today's environment, even a doctor knows that he or she cannot any more just tell the patient to follow instructions.

The doctor is often matched and challenged by the patient's access to knowledge and practice and insists on a participatory role on the route to recovery.

BN leaders must accept the fact that there is an awakening within civil society.

That society is no more caught within the limitations of the penny press of a bygone era where psychological warfare could move societies according to the whims and fancies of power brokers.

Even media moguls today are rudely being awakened to this changing information landscape.

It appears that there are only two options left for BN as the country creeps to its impending 13th general election.

One is for BN to accept the fact that it does not have the privilege of time and resources any more to do a thorough spring cleaning of its entire framework of entrenched political mindsets and untenable political standard operating procedures.

It has to prepare the ground to return to power as a shining star of hope in the 14th general election.

But most people know this would be a hard-to-swallow pill of salvation for BN.

Should it lose the general election, it may never rise again as the incoming winning political party may kill it off in its attempt to bring back wealth that has been stashed away.

The other alternative is for BN to seek a sincere act of contrition.

This will demand that BN goes into overdrive mode to purge its party of all misdeeds and bring to book in a transparent fashion, without fear or favour, all those who have thrived on crimes of misappropriation and corruption.

That will call for an intense and courageous shakeup strictly starting from the very top and going right down to the grass roots.

It would necessarily demand reviewing and enforcing all royal commission recommendations of the past; addressing the problems in the judiciary, the police and related enforcement bodies; and review and repeal of laws that protect power brokers but vilify ordinary civil society.

Now to do so, BN need not engage exorbitantly expensive external consultants. The middle path to accountable, transparent and justified governance is clearly plotted in the road map of Vision 2020.

Hence for as long as BN hollers all kinds of accusations and throws crybaby tantrums at opposition party leaders and accuses and admonishes citizens while counting on the large sector of rural electorates, BN is destined to make a dangerous fall down the ravine of political obsolescence.

So stop blaming your opposition enemies. Stop slamming labels of 'ungrateful public' on citizens' foreheads.

Stop devising and remote-managing race and religious fueled political wars.

Either BN changes with the times or it sinks like a stone. If it changes and embraces the aspirations of civil society it has every reason to celebrate.

If BN takes the old and expired political route of acting tough, branding its opponents as enemies and not embracing them as collaborators, then BN leaders must only blame themselves for the demise of its half-a-century-old dinosaur of a political party.

That citizens are expressing their concerns over BN's governance is a hopeful signal that they are still giving that last straw to the leaders and power brokers of BN to transform before God and man.

But when all else fails, civil society will join the world of peaceful protestors. This is the dictum of true democracy and rising civil liberties on this planet Earth.

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