

Change of government normal in any democracy
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As we approach Malaysia Day on September 16, I am reminded how our beloved country has been constantly jolted by the racial rhetoric of some politicians and some race based pressure groups that have suddenly sprung up after Barisan Nasional suffered major losses in the 2008 general election.

Race and religion have been at the forefront of many of the issues confronting our country today. The media and some politicians are the culprits since they so easily play the race and religious card to gain political mileage and perhaps to sell more papers. It is unfortunate that they do not stop to think how their transgressions are affecting the people of Malaysia especially our children and youths.

Racism and religious extremism is not born, it is taught by politicians and people without conscience, and by a media that is irresponsible.

I am thankful to God that my children are at an unimpressionable age at this period of time, since I do not need explain to them why places of worship are raided by the authorities, why religion should be an issue when the poor are being helped, why books like the bible are controlled, why non-Malays are made to feel that they are all out to take control of this country or that their second class citizens at the behest of the majority etc.

To those who are in power I ask you this - is the craze to seize power so great that you are willing to corrupt the minds of the people especially the young, with racist and skewed religious ideologies for your own narrow interest?

Why do you need to divide people in order to stay in power? You are quick to accuse the British of practising divide and rule policies ,but aren't you doing the same thing?

At least the British, despite engaging in a divide and rule type of administration, had left us the foundations for a strong civil service, a judiciary and a democratic style of government.

Our present politicians instead are slowly damaging what the British have left us with, by silencing legitimate criticism and reform measures with oppressive laws, trying to stay in power by undermining the democratic process by silencing calls for electoral reforms and playing up racial and religious issues according to their whim and fancies, so that they can remain in power forever.

Why is it so difficult for the powers that be to understand that a healthy democracy encourages changes in government; in fact that is what democracy is all about. We have seen this happening in the US, United Kingdom, Japan and India and nobody kicks up a big fuss about it.

It is an accepted fact of life in these countries that if the new government does not deliver as promised or has under-performed, they will be thrown out in the next elections. So what's the problem if BN does not form government?

It is only Malaysia where gutter politics is practised in order for its politicians to remain in power, by playing up racial and religious issues to the core to stay 'attractive' to their electorate.

As Malaysia Day approaches we as Malaysians should constantly remind ourselves that gutter politics is not what we want. We want capable, responsible and accountable leaders, period! No one political party should have a lien for life in Parliament. I am reminded of a quote by Thomas Jefferson, America's third president who said:

“Remember one thing about democracy. We can have anything we want and at the same time, we always end up with exactly what we deserve.”

There you have it, if we vote monkeys into Parliament then we deserve to get monkeys as our representatives.

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