

Enough of mass-debating
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While I can't help sympathising with well-meaning advocates for more mass-media political debates like last week's Astro-televised face-off between DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and MCA president Chua Soi Lek, I beg to disagree with them.

Not, I hasten to explain, that I concur with the recent statement by great master-debator himself, former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad (left), that what the Umnoputras contemptuously call "the masses" are "not ready yet" for public debates between opposing political figures.

Despite the Umno/BN regime's treating of Malaysians like ignorant children for the past 54 years, the vast majority of the nation's citizens have finally, to their considerable credit, grown up.

And today's younger generation of Malaysians are evidently even less susceptible to being infantilised and kidded by Umno/BN than their parents or grandparents were.

So Mahathir's claim that Malaysians are too childish to appreciate and comprehend public political debate on the grounds that the majority "tend to allow sentiments and feelings to influence them, rather than rational thinking" is as offensive as it's typically false.

And in any case, when did Mahathir himself ever display a capacity for rational thinking on this or any other issue?

The man's absolutely infamous for the irrationality if not outright insanity of his sentiments and feelings on everything from race and religion to his paranoid delusions of a Jewish/Israeli/Zionist conspiracy to rule the world in general, and Malaysia in particular.

Of course, there have always been at least a minority of Malaysians both adult and aware enough to debate and indeed decry the desirability of eternal domination of the nation by the ugly Umno/BN regime.

But, especially during Mahathir's 22-year premiership, these visionaries were vastly out-debated by a political system that used its pimps and prostitutes in the mainstream media to dumb-down the level of discourse and deceive as many of the Malaysian people as possible.

Since the days of reformasi, however, the grossly unfair imbalance in the debate has been steadily reduced, of not yet entirely eliminated, by the rising power of unbiased online newspapers, the pro-democracy blogosphere and virtual social networking.

So that Malaysians have now seen, heard and increasingly participated in 13 years of increasingly well-informed and ferocious political debate.

Change of government

Such a mass of debate, in fact, that it seems to me that it's started to look for all the world like an exercise in mass-debation.

Far too much wanking on with words, words, words, and not enough actual action like whistle-blowing, registering to vote, rallying in protest and supporting opposition movements.

What Malaysia needs now is not still more conversation, but a change of government. Not still more dialogue, but total rejection and replacement of a diseased regime.

Not yet more opportunities for Umno/BN's self-styled master-debators to spout their self-love, self-importance and self-praise in support of their overweening self-interest, but the ejection of these crooks, incompetents and crazies from political office.

And in any case, what's left to debate? What's debatable, for a start, about Umno/BN's inglorious record of public robbery and plunder?

There's nothing debatable whatever about the theft and embezzlement by Umno/BN members and cronies of countless billions of ringgit in an unending list of massive scandals involving, in no particular order, organisations and projects including Bank Bumiputra, Maminco, Bank Negara Forex, the Crooked Bridge, Sime Darby, the Scorpene submarines purchase, Matrade, Bursa Malaysia share issues, approval permits, Perwaja Steel, InventQ, the PKFZ, the PSC Naval dockyard, Bank Islam, Wang Ehsan, Valuecap, Perimeker, IMT Defence, Education Department ICT purchases, bailouts of Malaysian Airlines System, the STAR-LRT, the Putra Transport System, the Seremban-Port Dickson Highway, the Kuching Prison and the National Sewerage System and the recent soft loan to the National Feedlot Corporation.

Nor is there anything debatable about the fact that Umno/BN's Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) routinely fails to properly investigate such appalling instances of major-league corruption, let alone most of the lesser cases revealed every year by the office of the auditor-general, and all those either spun or concealed by the miserable mainstream news media.

And speaking of corruption, it is beyond debate that the royal Malaysian police force is corruptly in cahoots with both its Umno/BN masters and elements of organised crime, as well as on the take from millions of relatively minor offenders against road, traffic and other regulations.

Hate organisations and rabble-rousers

Also clearly evident and thus undebatable is the fact that Umno/BN so-called 'law' officers and some members of the judiciary are happy to preside over such miscarriages of justice as the failure to prosecute police and MACC personnel responsible for countless deaths in fake 'shootouts' and in custody, as well as such high-profile cases as the Altantuya Shaariibuu murder, the death of Teoh Beng Hock and the trials of Anwar Ibrahim on trumped-up sodomy charges.

And nobody can possibly debate the fact that, despite all these crimes it commits against the Malaysian people, the Umno/BN regime continues to cling to political office only through shameless gerrymandering of electorates, total dominance of the mainstream news media, secret manipulation of postal votes and blatant voter bribery.

It is also an undebatable fact that along with all this chicanery overseen by the electoral commission, Umno/BN also contrives to survive by promoting, sustaining and inflaming racial and religious divisions in Malaysia by means of hate organisations like Perkasa, rabble-rousing 'newspapers' like Utusan Malaysia and a host of regime-friendly 'religious' leaders.

In summary, far from fit participants in mass-debate, the leaders, members and accomplices of the Umno/BN government are nothing but a hopeless national debit.

And thus, far from being given face by being invited or challenged to participate in public discussions, these jerk-offs should be scorned, ignored, summarily voted or forced out of office, and consigned to wherever they belong, be it in jail or just political oblivion.

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