

**Bouquet of barbed wire for Dataran
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The irony of the Bersih 3.0 rally was that it was Ambiga Sreenevasan and not premier Najib Abdul Razak, who managed to unite the rakyat and give true meaning to his favourite slogan, '1Malaysia'.

NONE Ambiga united all Malaysians. They had one goal. How it must have hurt Najib that she had more magnetism than he does.

If democracy in Malaysia is like a dead man, then Bersih 3.0 successfully resurrected him. It just remains for the rakyat to nurse the dying democracy back to good health.

It is doubtful that the PM or any other Umno politician, could have attracted the size of crowd that filtered into Kuala Lumpur on Saturday. It is inconceivable that they could have united Malaysians on a national and global scale. Umno just manages to divide the races. If Umno cannot see this, then it is either too obtuse or in denial.

People know that Umno events are subsidised by the party. Taxpayers' money is used for providing transport, makan and a small token of appreciation, averaging RM30, to each participant.

For Bersih 3.0, Ambiga and her committee promised nothing and gave no handouts. All she did was to restore faith and self-respect in each Malaysian. They gave each of us an opportunity to express our disapproval of the corrupt electoral system.

Tazlanhe rakyat just wanted Najib to clean up the Election Commission. It is not about toppling the government, but has everything to do with giving Malaysians clean and fair elections.

All Ambiga could guarantee was a long walk to Dataran Merdeka and the hope that, if everyone kept calm, the police might not react with the same violence as during Bersih 2.0.

It would be true to say that on the morning of April 28, the whole world and all of Malaysia held their breath. Malaysians overseas were glued to their computer screens or other social networking sites, trying to keep abreast of events as these unfolded at Dataran Merdeka.

Dataran breach barricade cordon 290412 Dataran Merdeka has witnessed many historic occasions, the most important being the lowering of the Union Jack and the hoisting of the Malayan flag at midnight on Aug 31, 1957. It would have been a moral coup if Bersih 3.0 had been able to stage the sit-down protest at Dataran Merdeka. That is why Najib and Umno banned the protest there.

The ever tolerant and law-abiding Malaysian happily compromised, provided they could have their march. Hundreds of thousands of Malaysians did so without incident.

Even if it is true as alleged that the opposition instigated the crowd to breach Dataran Merdeka, was the level of violence perpetrated by the police justified? Witnesses talked of exit routes being blocked off. Why did the police kettle the people and stop them from going home? Why make them angry and frustrated?

Bersih 3.0 rattled Najib. His ego is dented and he was piqued that the crowd treated the event like a street carnival. He was more piqued they dared to disobey his orders not to march. Did Najib have a hand in engineering violence, so that Ambiga would be discredited and Bersih 3.0 tarnished?

Najib's escapades

If trust is a two-way street, then Malaysians have been let down twice; once by the government, the second by the international community.

Some foreign media claimed that there were only 25,000 people at the Kuala Lumpur rally. Were they actually in Kuala Lumpur?

In late March, Najib had been full of self-praise when he said that Malaysia had moved up nine places in the Reporters Without Borders press freedom index. He won't be too pleased in 2013, when our ranking falls because of last Saturday's violence against journalists.

NONEThe British premier David Cameron will happily accept Malaysian ringgit in exchange for weapons and is more than pleased when EPF money is sunk into property in London. Malaysians cannot depend on the international community to effect change in this country.

Only Malaysians can do that from within. World leaders only want our cheap commodities and exports, and they will continue to turn a blind eye to Malaysia.

The colour yellow has a lot of significance. It is the colour of royalty and is symbolic of the Bersih struggle, but yellow also signifies cowardice.

When will the PM show some leadership qualities? When confronted with difficult questions he mumbles "No comment". At a private function at the Royal Selangor Club, it is alleged that he was asked if he would willingly transfer power to the opposition, should he lose GE13. He was non-committal, before walking out in a huff. Last week, the same thing occurred and he cut short a press conference when asked if he would testify at the Scorpene inquiry in Paris.

Najib has a knack for distancing himself from potentially difficult situations. He also keeps his hands clean by abrogating responsibility.

Last year, it was alleged that Najib wanted to avoid Bersih 2.0 on July 9 by leaving the country. He was due in England for a state visit on July 13 but was prevented from going early by his quick-thinking wife, who knew he would face intense criticism had he done so.

This time, Najib was conveniently away in Sarawak during Bersih 3.0, just as he was away in South Africa when Anwar Ibrahim's Sodomy II verdict was announced.

NONENajib left his home minister, the Kuala Lumpur mayor and the inspector-general of police in charge of Bersih 3.0. The PM could have allowed the people to let off steam and stage their protest at Dataran Merdeka, but was too arrogant and vain to allow the rakyat to voice their wishes.

Perhaps Najib should keep the garland of barbed wire that bedecks Dataran Merdeka. He should leave it looking like a gift-wrapped present which people can only admire from afar.

To complete the picture, he should place notices at Dataran Merdeka which read 'Look, but don't touch'. But why stop half-way? Why does he not rename the site? As the rakyat cannot appreciate their 'Independence Square', Najib should rename it Dataran Barisan Nasional.

The PM has made a mockery of reforms and made a hash of democracy. Perhaps we should be thankful that statues are banned in Malaysia, otherwise Najib's and the self-styled First Lady's faces would be staring at us from every street corner.

