

Kuala Lumpur has lost that Mona Lisa smile

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Sadly for me, DAP vice-chairman Tunku Aziz Ibrahim, on whose British-trained shoulders I had placed such high hopes, has become the lone voice in the wilderness of confusion.

All this was caused mainly because Tunku Aziz was trying in vain to be a voice of moderation as the polarisation intensified over the Bersih's choice of venue and the government's offer of another one before the Bersih 3.0 sit-in rally for free and fair election on April 28.

But most Malaysians are not confused.

They know that the basic issue is the right to assemble in peace, with only good senior police officers appointed to ensure that the Agong's peace is not disturbed by anyone, yes anyone, whatever their ulterior motives might be.

Most Malaysians know that the repeatedly declared peaceful assembly was a sit-in rally for free and fair elections, a basic human and democratic right, given the way things are being handled by our supposedly independent Elections Commission (EC).

Most Malaysians are also troubled and agitated by reports that (a) the No 1 and the No 2 in the supposedly independent EC are or were Umno members; and (b) there's unhindered gerrymandering in many constituencies where voters are willy nilly shunted from one constituency to another to weaken the Opposition.

If only there was no "Siapa Raja?" attitude that seemed to prevail among our Umno politicians when deciding on the refusal to allow Bersih to use for two hours the Dataran Merdeka, things would never have come to such an ugly pass.

The Dataran Merdeka would have been a much easier place for less police personnel to ensure that the rally was held in peace.

And there would never have been the need to gear up our police force through the deployment of tear-gas cops and water cannon vehicles.

In the result, that decision has cost our country dearly.

Why? On the record now, Kuala Lumpur remains the only city in over 72 cities around the world where violence erupted. Other towns in Malaysia never experienced that lacerated streak in their faces.

Kuala Lumpur has now become a Mona Lisa stripped of that certain smile in her face by that lacerated streak.

And do remember that Mona Lisa is valued because of that certain smile that has tantalised poets for ages.

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