

Is Muhyiddin sincere about avoiding a May 13?

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I challenge the Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to prove he is a responsible political leader and Malaysian nationalist when raising the spectre of May 13 wanting to prevent any recurrence and not indulging in the low-class, irresponsible, unscrupulous and contemptible double politics of fear and race to preserve Umno/Barisan Nasional in power at all costs in the next general election.

It has been reported that at a national youth conference held in Parliament yesterday, Muhyiddin called on the young generation to be united in order to ensure the country remains stable and peaceful and to avoid a repeat of the May 13, 1969 tragedy.

Muhyiddin was quoted as declaring at the conference, "We don't want May 13 repeated."

On behalf of DAP and Pakatan Rakyat, let me officially respond by declaring that we in DAP and Pakatan Rakyat also do not want a repeat of the May 13 tragedy and we pledge to do all we can to prevent any such recurrence.

DAP and Pakatan Rakyat offer to cooperate and work closely with Umno and Barisan Nasional to ensure that there will be no repeat of May 13 in the next general election, and Malaysians are entitled to ask how there could be a repeat of the May 13 tragedy if both political coalitions - Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Rakyat - sincerely pledge to work together in the national interest to prevent any such recurrence?

I confess I am concerned at the way Muhyiddin raised the spectre of May 13, which had been used in the past decades to create fear among voters as part of the scare tactics to force voters to vote for Umno and BN, as it raises the question whether the DPM was giving an assurance that there would be no May 13 recurrence or he was subtly threatening that there could be another May 13 if Umno loses power!

Could there be another May 13 in the next general election? My answer would be a strong NO.

Without going into the debate as to who should be held responsible for the May 13 tragedy in 1969 (and there are diametrically conflicting accounts and versions of who should be held responsible and this is why right from the beginning after the May 13 riots, DAP and I had called for an independent royal commission of inquiry into its causes) the circumstances today are completely different from those prevailing 43 years ago in 1969.

The most important difference between 1969 and the 13th general election is the emergence of a multiracial multi-religious national coalition represented throughout the country to peacefully and democratically challenge Umno/BN's hold to power in Putrajaya - as the Pakatan Rakyat coalition of PKR, PAS and DAP is a Malaysian coalition of all races, religions and regions in Malaysia.

Only the most irresponsible, anti-national and treacherous elements in our country can try to distort and misinterpret a Pakatan Rakyat victory in the 13th GE as victory of one race against another, as to justify wild thoughts tinkering with the idea of another May 13, when any victory for Pakatan Rakyat will be a Malaysian victory representing all races.

Is Muhyiddin sincere when he declared, "We don't want May 13 repeated"?

If so, the Prime Minister Najib Razak should break his silence and answer the question I had posed to him many times in the past three years - whether he would declare clearly and unequivocally that he would accept the verdict of the people in the 13th GE, including the election of a Pakatan Rakyat government in Putrajaya to replace the Barisan Nasional.

And to declare that he would personally ensure and facilitate a peaceful transition of federal power for the first time in the nation's history, to tell the world that Malaysia has become a normal democracy and even en route to become, in Najib's own words, "the best democracy in the world".

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