

Nation's destiny in our hands
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By KJ John

In an earlier column I had postulated that the nation may be moving in the right direction after the last general election, but I had questioned whether we were moving at the right speed.

I still believe that Najib Abdul Razak has tried his absolute best to move our 'Titanic' in the right direction, but unfortunately his own team has been his worst enemy to date.

Even Dr Mahathir Mohamad plays wayang kulit with Najib, although in less public ways than he did with Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Actually, the opposition and NGOs have been better friends to him. At least they do not seem to shoot him below the belt, other than to highlight the unfortunate legacies that already surround and continue to haunt him.

Therefore I do think it is time to give the other side a chance regardless of how many uncertainties there in our minds and hearts. Yes, maybe we have to even let things slide a bit more before they can really improve. What other choice do we have as a people who have been told to "listen, listen, listen" for almost 54 years.

Nevertheless, we still cannot let the devil we already know to continue to play politics with this nation any more ... his favourite song is 'I Did It My Way' and that 'way' is now becoming more obvious. It was fulfilled through various forms of bribery and corruption and the back door culture. I know and am aware that there is an alternate way.

Therefore, we must take charge of our nation by ourselves. We can move our nation to become one of the best in the world. That is because we are truly multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious people and that is our greatest asset.

Therefore, if we can master our national language, raise our standard of English and then learn a third language, we can quite easily become masters of any destiny of our personal choice.

Then too, we can also improve the quality of national governance because we will deploy multiple perspectives to appreciate, express or even understand any issue. Not just, listen, listen, and listen more!

At the 13th GE we, as citizens (excluding illegals) must make that significance and difference. But we can only do so if we remove our greatest enemy to our so-called ambition to become a truly universal and spiritual nation: the divide and rule policy. It is unfortunately a colonial heritage but which we have now mastered and fine-tuned into an

art form. Let me explain.

Newer realities

I attended a fund-raising dinner at PJ Hockey Stadium last Saturday. Anwar Ibrahim was one of the speakers. He made one poignant point which I think is worth repeating, if true.

Since he said it, I have had no time to review the validity of his story, but will choose to publish it as I now know that I appear to be taken seriously by the BN-related media people.

As Anwar was watching the closing ceremony of the Umno general assembly on TV, he noticed many people crying and wiping away their tears. Wondering why and who was making such a great speech he began to focus, and noticed that they were merely singing an old kampong-style Malay song which most Malays have learnt from young. It was a very evocative song and therefore the Umno Malays in the room were quite rightly moved to tears.

Then Anwar gave his 'listen, listen, and listen' version of the story he told. He said he was totally shocked when he noticed, after the song was sung, that even the MCA representatives in the Umno general assembly were clapping to their hearts' delight.

His next question - "Did they not know the real meaning and nuance of that song?" - actually opened my eyes to some newer realities in Malaysia.

Anwar then assumed the role of a singer and true educator and informed the audience of almost 5,000 that the last stanza talks about Malays losing their lands and property to foreigners, among whom, it was implied are the Chinese and Indian Malaysians. That is why Umno Malays were crying, because they really believed that they were losing their land to foreign robber barons.

Really, really, really, is that the whole truth? Is that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, to quote a blog site? Then charismatic Anwar gave his rendition of the song and concluded by singing that it is the Umno cronies who are the real thieves, regardless of whether we call them Malays, Chinese, Indians, Kadazans or Ibans.

I left educated that night. After all Anwar did also state that education and knowledge is the communication and dissemination of truths. Was that the whole truth?

A story of unity

When we were five young children, our father taught us about always staying united as a family. Once, in my memory, he actually told each of us to bring a stick and he showed us how he could easily break them as single units. Then he had us tie them together and demonstrated effectively that he could not as easily break them.

We as Malaysians, and yes as 1Bangsa Malaysians, must stand united in our commitment to avoid the divide and rule policy and philosophy which empowers and engenders all forms of bribery and corruption. And, I believe that yes, we can!

All we need is for about 5.8 million Malaysians to sign a pledge to say that we will not give one sen to bribery and corruption. We at OHMSI call this the ABC4Malaysians campaign. Please visit our website and make your anti-corruption pledge which we first launched in 2005.

Then the movement will really start. Remember that Gandhi said real change must start with the self.

Bribery and corruption have become endemic to the national culture. I never thought it possible. In fact I remember that in 1973 I wrote my first article on this subject for the Asian Beacon.

Since then I have studied this subject by reviewing the nature of human nature and concluded that it is in the very essence of man's nature to lie, to cheat and to hide some truths; all in the process of pursuing and securing one's own welfare.

Of course, all this is often glamorised as the "interests of the community" or "the interests of the nation-state" (especially if one is a politician), but the honest truth is that it is really guided and motivated by much self-interest and self-seeking security.

Therefore, I try not lie. If any reader believes that I have lied, I am sure that truthful individuals who know me will correct me. Others who do not know me can always use logic to correct and admonish me. Failing even that, I am sure that anyone can write to the editor of Malaysiakini asserting that I am lying and I am sure the editor will not ignore that complaint.

Consequently, there is never a need for me to revert to unknown blogs and assert truth seeking while remaining anonymous. When a truth-seeking blog site remains anonymous; the truth has already been established. Professor SH Nasr says, "A veil reveals as much as it hides."

Freedom of speech remains a fundamental freedom. But let us all also be aware that the Personal Protection Data Act 2010 has taken effect since January 2013.

May God bless Malaysia at the next general election!

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