

The four wives of Umno
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Umno has made the ridiculous claim that they did not cheat in GE12. They say that the claim is "proven" because the opposition won control of five states. Umno is afraid to say that without the cheating, more states would now be under the control of the opposition.

Put simply, Umno messed up. Someone miscalculated or did not do their job properly. The opposition's successes are being milked to the max, by Umno politicians, to imply that GE12 was a 'clean' election.

A man with four wives is expected to treat them equally, under Islamic law. The reality is that men have their favourite wives (and mistresses) and will doubtless give more money and material goods to the favourite in exchange for sexual favours and attention. This could be what happened in GE12. Umno underestimated the backlash from the constituents it neglected and got a thrashing.

Umno does neglect the rakyat. Whilst they receive a 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) of RM500 to keep them compliant, it is alleged that a minister's mistress was given RM1.5 million to keep her sweet and willing.

In yesterday's interview with The New Sunday Times, many statements from Umno strongman and former finance minister Daim Zainuddin stand out. He publicly announced that he was backing Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak in GE13, and rejected the candidature of opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim.

He said, "First, we are not an Arab country. And second, if there was rigging in previous general elections, how did Pakatan win five states in 2008?"

"Arab Spring has turned out to be an Arab Fall (for the lack of a unifying leadership and the instability it has induced)."

Daim is in denial, like most Umno politicians. He has chosen to ignore the reasons for the Arab Spring which include dissatisfaction with authoritarian rule, widespread poverty, the huge disparity between the rich and the poor, corruption, abuse of power, and human rights violations.

Malaysians have a choice. Unlike the North African states, we did not have to choose between military rule or an extremist Islamic party.

Anwar may not be perfect, but he has managed to unify Malaysia's opposition parties such as DAP and PAS. Despite their disagreements, PAS and DAP appear more committed to a common purpose - to rid us of a corrupt Umno government.

Some advice for the PM

Daim endorsed Najib's leadership, but had some advice for him.

He said, "Najib should reshuffle the cabinet. Bring in new faces. People think he is carrying too much deadwood in the cabinet. Most are already past their use-by date.

"I will support Najib... but he must fight corruption and crime, strengthen the nation's security and review the education system."

Despite the slew of scandals and damning evidence implicating Umno politicians, Najib (right) has taken no action. The scandals are state-sanctioned daylight robbery.

In 2008, Umno failed to capture all the states because it was arrogant and it believed in its own invincibility. The party leaders lacked humility. They failed to pay attention to detail.

Unlike a by-election - where the voting is confined to one constituency - a general election is a nationwide event, involving greater resources and planning. The manpower and bribery money has to be spread over a wide area and is not concentrated in one constituency, as in a by-election.

A pundit has alleged that in some areas, the voter turnout was abnormally high, despite the fact that the voters did not go out to vote because they had assumed there would be rigging. He wonders if the high turnout could have been due to the presence of ghost voters.

We've seen Umno's frivolity with the taxpayers' money. Perhaps, in 2008, all of the money that was meant as inducement to vote for Umno did not reach the people. Did this money end up in the pockets of various people as it made its way down the line?

In GE13, it is alleged that Najib is bypassing his regional Umno heads and giving the 'inducement' money straight to the divisional leaders. Even within the Umno hierarchy, trust is a commodity which is in short supply.

In GE13, Umno will spend several hundred millions of ringgits to steal your vote. The rakyat knows about the obvious vote-buying tricks like BR1M, the smartphone offers and the one-off payment to schoolchildren. What about the monies that are hidden, which are provided by Umno benefactors and cronies?

In the past, cheating has always been suspected at the polls, but the opposition politicians did not know the mechanisms of this cheating, nor could they easily obtain proof of electoral fraud. Their efforts were hampered by the Election Commission (EC) which acts like it is an extended arm of the Umno machinery.

Today, the opposition has unearthed many dirty tricks used by Umno to cheat; stuffing ballot boxes with marked votes, bribing tuai kampung (village heads) to influence the voting

patterns of the villagers, threats of violence, people finding that their voting centre has been changed, and manipulation of postal, army and police votes.

Who is really at fault?

Ex-premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad's 'Project M' has shown how citizenship was given to illegal foreigners in exchange for voting rights. How widespread is this treasonous act?

Malaysia can never achieve its vision of being a developed country and a respected democracy as long as it continues this path. We are a third-world banana republic. Opposition politicians and individuals run the risk of incarceration if they criticise the ruling party.

Today, Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein is trying to blame Anwar for the Sabah invasion, to deflect criticism of his (Hishammuddin's) failure to deal with the Suluk incursion. Meanwhile, Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud (right) blames Anwar for the expose by international NGO Global Witness.

At the end of the day, whose incompetence costed lives in Sabah? Whose corruption robbed the Sarawak people of their rights?

The rape of the Penan women remains unresolved, an Indonesian maid was gang-raped by policemen and women tourists have been targeted. Thus, violence against women increases because men feel emboldened.

If we had protested en-masse outside the women's ministry, district office, tourism department and police station until justice was seen to be done, the situation might be different today.

Similarly, whenever a politician is accused of corruption, we should protest outside the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) offices, government departments and police stations until an investigation is initiated. Protests help create responsible governments.

People in positions of responsibility must challenge their peers and superiors when they are asked to do something wrong or illegal.

Do not blame the politicians from either side for the depraved state of this nation. We allowed them to continue in office. We shrugged off their faults and carried on with our lives, when all it needed is for us, the rakyat, to stand united against corruption and injustice.

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