

Umno must change now, or be changed

MalaysiaKini.com

July 31, 2013

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COMMENT The spectre of the cowhead episode is rearing its head again in the issue of the shower canteen saga. By all assessments, one cannot but conclude that the feeling of "Ketuanan Melayu", not only in the core incident but also in the way that Selangor Umno responded, is resurfacing.

NONEThe recent proposal by Selangor Umno liaison committee chairperson Noh Omar (right) in a Facebook post that "I want the police to investigate the parent who raised this matter under the Sedition Act" is outrageous.

BN lost Selangor with a larger margin in the just concluded GE and yet Umno does not seem to have learnt its lesson, about what the people want.

Clearly what the GE results reflect is that the Malay electorate does not care much for this kind of "Ketuanan Melayu" rhetoric any more in the urban centres

NONEEven as it may have some draw in rural Malaysia, the urban centres are where the growth is. The political slant of Umno is clearly out of sync with demographic developments.

What the rakyat as a whole yearn for now is a truly just and fairer Malaysia run on the principles of social justice and human rights. The harder Umno pushes in this counter-direction, the harder it will be for it to achieve what it badly strives for.

An extension of this tendency where the "powerful" focus on the victims and not the perpetrators is the constant use of double standard in the response of the police, the administration, the judiciary to the many contentious inter-ethnic or inter-religious issues.

This is evident in the uproar and attention that is generated in the mainstream whenever Malay Muslim feelings are hurt versus the "casualisation" of the responses by those in power whenever it is non-Malay, non-Muslim feeling that is hurt.

The youth will decide

We have bigots like Zulkifli Noordin, Shah Kirit, and the former mufti of Perlis, running around and never touched for the malicious and poisonous messages they

spread in their various public utterances.

Contrast that with the major outbreaks of mayhem to the similarly obnoxious public utterances by non-Muslims about anything Malay and Muslim - not that, that is justifiable or to be condoned. The point is about the different responses these similar seditious statements evoke from those in power.

NONEThis seems to be repeating in spite of the negative consequences to Malaysian society as a whole and even to Umno itself. The explanation that best fits the facts seem to be that Umno is incapable of dealing with the changes occurring in Malaysian society and continues to blindly use worn concepts and methods of divide and rule.

The youth continue to become a larger factor in the election process and they are the ones most accessible by the social media and the social media is totally supportive of the movement for a fairer and just Malaysia.

This latest incident involves schoolchildren where at least those in Form Four and Five now will be on the electoral roll in time for the next GE. Many such issues on top of being morally abhorrent and which occupy large spaces in the social media, are also directly touching the youth of the country. And yet Umno prefers to remain blissfully oblivious of this trend.

The trend is reflected clearly in the outcome of the last two GEs. If we extrapolate that to the next GE with the addition of five years of more youths joining the electoral process in the urban centres, the writing is clearly on the wall.

Can or will Umno wake up to the true yearnings of the people, stop the bullying and join in the process of creating a fairer and more just Malaysia? One thing for sure is that Umno does not have the wherewithal to change the flow of history. Its only option now is to change from top down or face certain demise.

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