

With Bersatu PM, we're back to square one
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COMMENT After much demurring, Dr Mahathir Mohamad finally let slip a picture of what is to come if Malaysians back his campaign to oust Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and BN in the next polls.

And the picture is this - much of the same thing.

Mahathir did this by revealing that Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) pro-tem president Muhyiddin Yassin is the [top pick for PM](#), if the opposition wins the general election.

The thought of Muhyiddin taking the top seat in Putra Perdana is in itself ghastly news for many Pakatan Harapan backers.

But it is the system that Muhyiddin, as the Bersatu PM, would bring into the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) that should raise more alarm bells.

According to Mahathir, Muhyiddin would not be like the "dictatorial" Najib whom he said is acting at his whims and fancies, having sneakily bought loyalty from all who matter.

Unlike his unilaterally-acting predecessor, said Mahathir, Muhyiddin the Bersatu PM will be bound by the Bersatu framework.

Mahathir said the Bersatu PM will be compelled to consult with the Bersatu chairperson on policy matters, as well as the central committee.

Why? Because cabinet ministers will likely be too beholden to the PM, having been appointed to the post by the man.

While I appreciate the intention of keeping a prime minister accountable, what this really means is that a Bersatu PM will just be a repeat of what we have now.

Umno may not have "safeguards" like compelling the PM to consult with the party chairperson on policy matters.

However, observers still keep a close watch on the Umno supreme council meetings, particularly after policy announcements that have sparked debate or outrage.

And there have been instances where Umno, through its supreme council, decides on policy.

Recall the decision to retain the Sedition Act, which Najib announced at the Umno general assembly in 2014, following policy speeches from wing leaders to do exactly that.

Najib then said the decision to retain this colonial remnant which continues to curb our freedoms, was made after consultation with party leaders.

Similarly, in PKR-led Selangor, a sitting menteri besar was ousted, among other reasons because he did not accede to the party committee's advice on policy.

Same ol' same ol'

So this council of elders or whatever it may be that Mahathir seems to be selling as a solution to our woes, seems very much same ol' same ol'.

It is this: A group of politicians we did not elect, making decisions that will affect our daily lives, our future and the future of our children.

(Sidenote: Those living in KL may understand this more acutely, having an unelected mayor so out of touch that he believes most KLites support his parking fee hike policy. I personally do, but heated discussion with family and friends indicate many clearly don't. Even more clear is this mayor does not care if KLites support it or not, as he doesn't need to get re-elected.)

Happily or not, the vision of a Bersatu PM and his council of un-elected advisors, will probably not come true.

Already Pakatan Harapan has put its foot down, saying their choice is and has always been [Anwar Ibrahim for PM](#).

Never mind that GE14 is next year and the PKR de facto leader is behind bars with a sentence to end in 2020.

But more importantly, to have a PM, the anti-BN coalition needs to first muster a victory at the polls.

Go figure.

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