

Expect differences opinion in Harapan
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COMMENT | The recent spate of disagreements and what appears to be cracks in Pakatan Harapan, to me is just normal.

In short, this is to be expected and there is nothing to be alarmed about. It is not like we have reached the end of the world. After all, we do not expect politicians to be spineless individuals.

They have to be outspoken in order to be heard. The mark of maturity is when they are able to come together despite these differences of opinion.

When former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad decided to abandon Umno Baru, which he had personally created, I was happy to see that.

There are, of course, some politicians who would not agree with Mahathir (*photo*) joining Pakatan Harapan, but here again, I understand that they have a right to their opinion.

Politicians who represent the people's interest cannot just give way to the party strongmen, especially when they feel strongly about a particular issue.

In the past, the country has seen enough of men and women who would rather remain silent in order to protect their own interests.

I salute politicians like PKR vice-president Rafizi Ramli who despite differences in opinion with his colleagues and despite having a 30-month jail sentence hanging around his neck, still stands by his exposes.

Without his exposes, we would still be in the dark about the scandals plaguing the country.

Mark of maturity

However, what is important is that these strong individuals come together the moment the battle cry is sounded. There is time for reconciliation and coming together to form the battlefield.

Based on past general elections, by the time all the candidates are nominated, all factions will come together to put up a good fight.

The same situation exists even in BN, for example, between MIC and People's Progressive Party (PPP) over the allocation of seats. Even the loan of certain seats has also caused some unhappiness within party grassroots.

This was the explanation I gave to a friend who asked why Penang Harapan has failed to settle their seat allocations between themselves.

As an ordinary citizen speaking to a fellow countryman, I pointed out to him that even in the holiest of organisations (temples, churches and mosques), people do have differences of opinion.

Unity in diversity is what makes a coalition stronger. As Malaysians, we have seen enough of the subjugation of certain parties by the bigger brother in the ruling coalition; we can only pray that such will not happen in Pakatan Harapan.

If we desire to see a change in our political landscape, we have to accept that infighting between component parties in Harapan is something to be expected.

BN and Harapan must have equal chances

What we all want is that both BN and Harapan have an equal chance to win. That way, we keep both sides wanting to serve the rakyat better when they take over Putrajaya.

Today, we may be supporting Harapan; tomorrow, when Harapan is in power for too long, we may have to extend our support to BN.

It is only when there is tough competition between the two coalitions for the people's votes that we will see a change of attitude in our leaders.

Someday, I may be supporting BN but for now, I hope to see Harapan taking over Putrajaya for at least two terms to allow them to clean up the mess.

My only condition (which I shared with my friend) for BN to get my support, is this: 'BN leaders have to be close to the grassroots and feel the pulse of ordinary Malaysians instead of coming out with policies like free plastic bags.'