

LETTER | Merdeka - a new narrative

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LETTER | Merdeka means "independent" or "free", derived from the Sanskrit maharddhika (rich, prosperous, and powerful). The term was used by anti-colonialist and pro-independence movements demanding independence from the colonial administrations. In Mindanao, the Moro people use maradeka.

It commemorates the Malayan Declaration of Independence and is defined in Article 160 of the Constitution of Malaysia (important impact on Islam and the Malays due to its definition under clause 2).

Tunku Abdul Rahman declared independence with seven shouts of "Merdeka".

The celebration is generally a day of lifting flags and singing 'Negara Ku' with grand parades at Dataran Merdeka.

Some sixty years later, while we commemorate independence from the British, we now need to free ourselves from the new 'colonialists'.

They are not foreigners but are among us.

Their long-term indoctrination and their own interpretation and version of the Federal Constitution is damaging to all. And they come from both sides of the political divide.

We are in troubled waters.

The executive seems to have unlimited executive, legislative and financial powers directly and indirectly. The wheeling and dealing to secure advantages for themselves is public knowledge.

Corruption is a crime, but political funding (without limits) is allowed. We also have party-hoppers to make all these possible.

They even want to control the judiciary which is the last bastion for defending the rule of law in a democratic country.

How do we put a stop to all this nonsense and look for ways to put our beloved country back on track? Our neighbours have either left us behind or overtaken us and created opportunities to overtake us.

We are neither rich nor powerful. Even a tank and a prime mover involved in the Merdeka parade rehearsals broke down causing traffic jams. The six littoral combat ships ordered many years ago are still work-in-progress.

For over a decade, we have been fed with slogans like 1Malaysia, Malaysia Baru and Keluarga Malaysia. But all have no real lasting effect on the fabric of Malaysian society.

Do we resemble a family - where we complement each other and are in need of one another as part of a single body?

Malaysia's national crest is "Unity is Strength" (Bersekutu Bertambah Mutu) but are we anywhere near it? Look at the Sheraton Move and today, even the prime minister is under pressure from his own party.

Is the Rukun Negara merely to be upheld symbolically each time the pledge is recited on National Day?

A couple of years ago, the Agong said, the soul and spirit of the Rukun Negara should be appreciated and practised in all aspects of daily life to overcome differences and diversity to live in peace and harmony. He added that the principles should serve as a guide and be practised by leaders, government and

Malaysians.

He also reminded all quarters to respect and defend all things that matter, including privileges and rights that had been agreed upon and enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

Most importantly, he said justice in this country is bound by laws that must be respected and complied with by every citizen regardless of rank and title.

Previously, we had anti-colonialist and pro-independence movements demanding independence from the British.

Do we have such movements now to free us from these new 'colonialists'? If there are, how strong and influential are they or will they be easily intimidated and threatened?

We still have some smart, reasonable and level-headed leaders. I trust they can stand up, move forward and champion this cause to free us from the greedy new 'colonialists'.

Selamat Hari Merdeka Malaysians and I pray with divine intervention, we will have a better future and truly celebrate Merdeka.

What say you?

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