

YOURSAY | May GE15 be a Mahathir-free Harapan coalition

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Vijay47: Dr Mahathir Mohamad has waved an olive branch to PKR president Anwar Ibrahim. Should Anwar choose to meet the former prime minister, let it be a mere display of common courtesy by a younger man to an invitation from a much older. Nothing more.

If the meeting is intended to be a prelude to renewed cooperation between Pakatan Harapan and whatever motley crew of rejected politicians that Mahathir now leads, Anwar should reject the reunion outright.

It would defy belief if Anwar or anybody else should accept anything, olive branch or even white flag, that the cunning, conniving being may offer - in five simple words, "Never again trust Mahathir Mohamad."

It is not that he lied before but that he has always only lied. Never mind that

promise of passing the baton after one year, but his real evil mind can be seen in his post-2018 machinations.

Founded on non-Malay hope and faith, even despair, and Malay disenchantment, we did the impossible and formed the government. Before long, the leopard showed its true coloured spots, it snarled silently that the government should be 'by Malays, for Malays' exclusively.

Within months, midnight trysts were arranged where traitors were taught to stab allies. In the twisted aftermath and by poetic justice, Mahathir himself was left discarded by the roadside.

Now, unbelievably, Mahathir is again playing the very same record. This time, the Kerala Greek bearing gifts is offering a chalice everyone knows holds poison.

It would be the height of his arrogance if he imagines that Harapan would again walk into his crudely devised trap. Or would it?

In the famous words of the late DAP leader Karpal Singh, "Over my dead body."

Apanama is Back: Harapan, whatever option you choose to go, do a good job. Win or lose, at least your honour and principles are intact.

The mistrust of Mahathir is too strong and too deep. In 1998, it was "tikam depan" (frontal stab), whereas in 2020 it was "tikam belakang" (backstab).

Remember, there is no right and wrong answer here. Since I favour cooperation of all opposition to defeat the kleptocrats, which will not materialise, then you need to go "solo" with PKR, DAP, Amanah and Upko, plus PSM and Muda.

MS: Anwar and Mahathir share one thing - both believe in the Machiavellian principle "the end justifies the means", that the moral quality of one's actions is completely determined by its consequences, that vanquishing Umno and its many criminal elements justifies any pact however distasteful.

That belief motivated their dalliance in 2016 when the wily Mahathir met the Anwar he once jailed in the courtroom. Then as now, they were lured by the possibility of dealing a final and fatal blow to those who got the country its kleptocracy label.

But as the cynics would say, it was really a quid pro quo arrangement which would see the early release of Anwar and the second coming of Mahathir - a variation of the felon's "you help me, I help you" now adopted by caretaker prime minister Ismail Sabri Yaacob and his puppeteers.

But we know how it all ended. We know the price we paid just when the pandemic started taking its toll on the country's financial health as infected bodies began piling up in mortuaries.

Governance, since then, has suffered mortally and vengeance as never seen before is on top of Umno's "Malay agenda".

So, we are sort of back where we started, with frequently estranged bedfellows about to indulge in another "fake it 'til you make it" sandiwara.

It may, for all we know, lead to the partial sanitising of Umno, purging it of some of its toxicity and the return of saner minds in Putrajaya and better governance for all.

If indeed that happens, the question to ask in late November 2022 is whether we are proud of how we achieved it, whether as Ovid once wrote "Exitus acta probat" (the outcome justifies the deed).

Falcon: I am no expert on Anwar but I do know the man since 1982, his super lovely wife who was my wife's professional colleague at Universiti Hospital, and their daughter, Nurul Izzah.

The facts are there. There was a request for a meeting from an elderly politician, which was interpreted as an olive branch.

Anwar was being polite and responded that there were no issues for both to meet, and saying no more. Sadly, 200-plus commentators in Malaysiakini criticised him.

This statement by PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution should be taken as a policy statement and put the matter to rest. For Harapan, GE15 will be a Mahathir-free coalition!

However, it would be good if Mahathir could go public to state that he endorses Anwar as prime minister in the event Harapan emerges victorious at GE15.

This does several things and among them:

1. Put to rest any residue ambition that Mahathir wants to be PM for a third time.
2. Get his party and allies to support Harapan in the Malay heartland.
3. Set Mahathir up to play the role of an elder statesman in his remaining days, resigned to the fact that he's had his days and that time is fast approaching to

make peace with multi-racial, multi-religious Malaysia instead of continuing to play race-based sentiments of Malays versus the rest.

Failing which, this animosity between Mahathir and the rest of real Malaysia will never end, like the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation. It's in Mahathir's interest to do the right thing and I pray he does.

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