

COMMENT | Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's most narcissistic of all?

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COMMENT | If Malaysian politics is a fairy tale, then Dr Mahathir Mohamad is the vindictive stepmother who cannot bear the thought of the mirror uttering another name or one that he has not sanctioned.

In a more seasonal tale, he would be a Machiavellian-Dickensian Ebenezer Scrooge who would refuse to heed the warnings of the three spirits of Christmas and remain unrepentant.

If set in the 1980s, he would have locked them up together with Lim Kit Siang without trial for dissent.

So it is no surprise that Mahathir continues to speak ill of Anwar Ibrahim albeit the reformasi Snow White has made certain alterations to the manuscript, which some find unpalatable, in aligning with dwarves of questionable character and motives.

While narcissism is a common trait amongst politicians, in Mahathir, however, it is personified.

There is perhaps not a single person in this or other realms whom Mahathir considers capable of administering the nation apart from himself. And if the grapevines are to be believed, the latest addition to this list is his son as well.

His handpicked successor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi failed to meet his expectations, his handpicked replacement to topple his handpicked successor Najib Abdul Razak proved to be a greater disappointment and his handpicked accomplice to oust the handpicked replacement who deposed his handpicked successor Muhyiddin Yassin turned out to be a treacherous usurper.

The handpicked-for-nothing Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who landed the post due to providence and not design, is the sole prime minister since 2003 spared the geriatric wrath and whose 15-month rise and fall were devoid of Mahathir's fingerprints.

Twenty-four years ago, Mahathir had deemed his then heir-apparent unsuitable as well on claims that the latter's moral compass pointed south.

Therefore, if there is one lesson to be gleaned from the past four decades of

Mahathirism is that he is a hopeless judge of character.

In his latest interview, the monarch of doublespeak alleged that Anwar had failed to resolve the economic problems when he became acting prime minister for a few months in the 1990s.

Therefore, Mahathir is not confident that the new prime minister, ranked amongst the top four finance ministers in the world during the above-mentioned period, would be able to navigate Malaysia through the current economic turbulence.

Despite this and other so-called transgressions, he had no reservations in working with the Pakatan Harapan chairperson, agreeing to him being his successor and freeing him from prison to achieve his agenda during the 2018 general election.

A week before the 15th national polls last month, Mahathir, in recalling the collapse of the Harapan government, rebuked Anwar and his supporters for blaming him for the PKR president's failure to become prime minister.

He claimed the finger should be pointed at Muhyiddin, Azmin Ali, Hamzah Zainudin and Anwar himself for pushing several PKR leaders to conspire against

him.

Mahathir has lost the plot

Mahathir's latest remarks, however, laid bare his true sentiments. The irrefutable truth is that he never wanted Anwar to succeed him.

Consequently, seeing his anointed successor-turned-nemesis-turned-associate-turned-foe in the seat of power must be interfering with the circuits in his pacemaker.

Karma is a b.... But for the sake of decorum, let's call it a boomerang instead of the five-letter word.

The recent polls also revealed how Mahathir had lost the plot. It was the nadir of an illustrious and controversial political career.

The doctor had failed to feel the pulse of the people, even those in his home state of Kedah and the island of Langkawi, whose "seven generations of misfortune" curse he had been credited with ending.

Before the 2018 election, the late Mahathir stalwart Zainuddin Maidin had

proclaimed: "It is confirmed that Mahathir will contest in his 'fixed deposit' seat of Langkawi to end another curse... If he can end the curse of Mahsuri, what more the curse of Umno?"

Last month, Mahathir lost his deposit in the "fixed deposit" seat.

On a horological note, time would answer if Anwar can lead Malaysia through the economic turmoil but for Mahathir, the clock has stopped ticking. His fate is not written, but engraved on the wall. He is a spent force.

Regrettably, he did not make a gracious exit with his head held high when fate presented him with a second chance. He overestimated himself, underestimated the electorate and suffered an ignominious defeat.

Enough. Enough said, enough done.

The grand old wizard of Malaysian politics must realise that his wand is broken. There is no magic left in him nor spells to cast. It is time for the hippophile, who owns close to 40 horses, to ride off into the sunset.

This is the dawn of Anwar's era.

After several false starts, the PKR president appears to have secured the required number of support in the August House which has eluded him since 2008 but just not as “strong, formidable and convincing” as he had hoped for.

Nonetheless, becoming prime minister is the “happily ever after” ending Anwar had sought since 1998 but it remains to be seen if his reign would be able to withstand the test of time and pressure from adversaries to herald a similar climax for Malaysia.

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