

Nation's sovereignty bigger than any political party
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After his attempt in 1987, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah has made one unsuccessful attempt to run for the Umno presidency in the last party polls. I believe he did this not because he is so desirous of the position which he came so close of winning in 1987 but because he believes in the 'the people's choice' in democracy.

It is hardly a choice when there is only one man standing for elections - unopposed.

Similarly, it has to be more than just a case of having too much money to throw away, when Ralph Nader runs for the president of the US every four years and loses. It is because he believes that there should be more than two choices for the citizens of America. It is really a matter of principle.

After 50 years of independence, Malaysia needs more than one party in power. Malaysia needs a credible opposition, who should be seen as a 'government in waiting'. It is provided for in our parliamentary system and not an impossibility. In many developed, mature democracies, the opposition is seen as part of the government and in the UK is known as Her Majesty's Opposition party.

It matters little to the national security or stability of the country because there is the rule of law and the respect for the constitution of the land. Power is handed over from one political party to another in peaceful transition. This is essential to ensure that the government is truly by the people and for the people. It ensures most of all – choice.

In Malaysia, the newspapers and television news are filled with consistently rosy views about the economy and other news affecting the nation. They rarely cover any news with regards to the opposition and if they do, it will most likely be bad news about infighting, disunity, fanaticism, misstatements and blunders which the majority of the public will swallow hook, line and sinker. This is especially true when it is repeated over and over again.

Fair news about the opposition rarely makes it to the public domain what with few print and broadcast licenses given out by the Home Ministry.

Gatherings and 'ceramah' - which are now becoming more prominent in urban KL - are also curtailed by the police with personnel like the FRU in full riot gear.

The only medium now untouched and available to Malaysians is cyberspace where the young are constantly debating their thoughts and ideals through blogs and forums like this. These avenues, however, do not reach a great majority of Malaysians - at least not enough to create a sizeable awareness about the opposition.

Government agencies are meant to serve the rakyat not political parties. The Attorney-General, the police, the Election Commission and the ACA must all be independent agencies doing their jobs without fear or favour. Irregardless of the ruling political party of the day, these government agencies are meant to uphold the constitution of Malaysia and the rule of law.

When this happens, then we are set on becoming a true democracy where the nation is larger

than the political party. We must always remember that Malaysia and her sovereignty is bigger and larger than any political agenda or party.

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