

Dr M a misunderstood great leader?

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Dr Mahathir Mohamad has, of late, become even more vocal in pitting the Malays against the non-Malays, in particular the Chinese. The consequence is that the blogs and Internet sites are full of slander and insults targeted at Mahathir. The insults and name-calling range from 'corrupt evil dictator' to 'Mahafiruan', 'Hitler' and worse (too horrible to be quoted here).

What these bloggers seem to overlook is that Mahathir was elected by the voters in Kubang Pasu in at least six general elections, elected by Umno delegates to be their president for more than two decades and was Malaysia's prime minister for 22 years, strongly supported by the majority of the non-Malays.

During his tenure, Mahathir was more popular with the Chinese than the Malays and was even saved by them in the 1999 general elections when the Malays abandoned him because of how he had treated Anwar Ibrahim, contrary to adat-adat orang Melayu. Mahathir was then admired by many of the same people who are now insulting and criticising him.

They had noted Mahathir's many accomplishments and felt proud about these 'Malaysia Boleh' records - the Petronas Twin Towers, the KL Tower, KLIA, the North-South Highway, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya, the MSC initiative, the Penang Bridge, Proton, the Sepang F1 circuit, Bakun Dam, world class golf courses and resorts, etc.

They were proud at having found a leader who had changed Malaysia from an agricultural country into an industrial nation which was doing so well that it needed to bring in foreign labour from Indonesia, Bangladesh, etc, to man the factories, service industries and remaining plantations. During his tenure as PM, Mahathir was highly regarded and there were few who would dare to throw even minor insults at him. Not even Karpal Singh would dare to utter a harsh word against the great Dr Mahathir.

Today, we are witnessing this same great Mahathir being called the most evil things. However, while the slander and insults continue to increase on the Internet, they are not backed by solid evidence. Has anyone ever come out in the open with evidence and said: 'Mahathir did this and that...'?

Even Anwar, who was Mahathir's deputy for many years and would have been privy to many things, has revealed nothing to expose Mahathir. There are people who claim that Mahathir is corrupt and has amassed great wealth. Okay, where is the evidence? If you have the evidence, why haven't you reported Mahathir to the police? And 'Mahathir is a racist', some proclaim loudly, pointing out incidences such as Mahathir's recent call to Malays to go on the offensive in response to grouses and complaints by non-Malays about their rights.

Why has there been no police report and follow-up action against Mahathir for uttering the racist statements? If Mahathir is so evil and corrupt, as the bloggers and others claim, why has there been no police or MACC investigation? Surely, Mahathir is not above the law, as the Tun himself will be ready to openly announce. Some might argue that the police, MACC and AG will not investigate Mahathir because of allegiance or loyalty.

But Mahathir is not the current PM and does not wield power and influence over them. The police, MACC and AG report to Najib, who has also been criticised by Mahathir on various

matters, and who would, if he could, surely mobilise the police/MACC/AG to investigate the ex-PM to counter his severe insults and criticisms. This has not happened possibly because there is no evidence to charge Mahathir.

The only mistake that Mahathir has ever done, as openly acknowledged by the Tun himself, is to repeatedly appoint 'wrong' deputy prime ministers for the country (Musa, Ghafar Baba, Anwar and Badawi, and Najib).

Some might argue that little can be done if the authorities (police, MACC and AG) do not want to act against Mahathir. The point is that the authorities can act only if there are reports against Mahathir. Some may point to the rare police reports against Mahathir, such as the one by Karpal Singh, and that nothing has happened. Perhaps there is no evidence for the authorities to proceed further.

Or maybe Karpal does not have the necessary evidence to pursue it further (or maybe Karpal is too scared to face Mahathir or his formidable counsel Mathias Chang in court, and has conveniently forgotten his report against Mahathir).

Okay, the royal commission of inquiry into the Lingam video clip provides evidence to incriminate Mahathir (together with Lingam and the others) in the manipulation of the judiciary. Najib (and the AG) has decided to ignore the findings and recommendations of the RCI for reasons which are known to all but the naive. But the critics of Mahathir can surely do something on the basis of the RCI recommendations.

Have a massive signature campaign to request His Majesty to direct Najib to act on the findings of His Majesty's RCI's findings. There can be a mass demo to call for action on the basis of the RCI recommendations. Or, at least, why not make police reports on the basis of the RCI findings for action to be taken against Mahathir and his Lingam gang.

Mahathir has made some totally outlandish racist statements of late. Make a thousand police reports against Mahathir. Make it a million - there must be more than a million Mahathir critics out there. Surely, the authorities can't ignore a million police reports against Mahathir, and, even if they ignore, that itself would be a world record (another 'Malaysia Boleh' world record we can be proud of) which will hit headlines internationally and force Najib to do something. The fact is that there are few police reports against Mahathir, though one would think otherwise when reading the many slanderous and abusive postings on blogs and web sites.

Some people might contend that it would be futile to go to the police or the MACC, arguing that it would be a waste of time and that nothing would happen. Looking at the track record of the police and MACC, one would be justified to conclude that this route would be futile, but there are other routes such as a civil suit.

If one has a legitimate case against another, one can bring a civil suit against the other. But there has hardly been any civil suit against Mahathir. Even Anwar withdrew his civil suit against Mahathir for his 'black eye' though Mahathir was the Home Minister then and claimed that Anwar could have punched himself to get the black eye.

To conclude, if Mahathir is really as corrupt, racist and evil as he is made out to be, the critics and bloggers should (collectively, or individually) file a police report against the ex-PM with solid evidence. If this route does not look viable, they could file a civil suit against Mahathir and seek damages for all Malaysians - according to Barry Wain, at least RM100 billion has been misappropriated or lost due to Mahathir.

If Mahathir is really the terrible, corrupt, evil, racist he is made out to be, it is okay to be a 'coward' to sue him. Given that there is a large number of bloggers who are critical of Mahathir, there should have no difficulty in raising the necessary funds for the civil suit and engaging top lawyers (Karpal - pro-bono?) to handle the case. File the suit in Malaysia, UK or anywhere feasible (except, of course, Singapore).

If both these efforts fail, the bloggers should compile a book, in English and Malay, on Mahathir to expose his 'corruption, racism, and evilness' by providing full details and evidence. Barry Wain has already made a sterling start in this direction with his must-read Malaysian Maverick. Why not get someone to translate the book into Malay so that the kampung folk and other Malays can read Barry's work and judge for themselves whether Mahathir is really the great, clean incorruptible champion of the Malays as he now portrays himself?

If Mahathir's opponents and critics are not ready to act in legitimate ways to expose and punish Mahathir for his purported corruption, racism and evilness, the bloggers and other critics of Mahathir should cease from slandering and insulting the Tun and accept him as Allah's blessing rather than a perennial curse on Malaysia.

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