

**The power's with the people**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**October 4, 2010**

By all means, ban the books, jail the cartoonists, muzzle the opposition leaders and stop students from taking an interest in politics, but who can stop the ordinary person from seeking a better future for himself and his children?



When 300 Malaysians in London gave up their Saturday afternoon, it was not to indulge in Malaysia's favourite pastime. It was to hear opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim (*left*), Raja Petra Kamarudin, PKR information chief Tian Chua and DAP Senator Tunku Abdul Aziz, cover various issues at the Cruciform Lecture Theatre in University College London.

One could not fail to notice the comparative absence of students (unlike Anwar's talk at the London School of Economics earlier this year). No one was shocked when the Malaysian students stayed away; they feared the loss of their scholarships.

If these political leaders had to meet outside Malaysia to discuss serious issues, then it tells us a great deal about what sort of nation we have become.

Might this also be a rallying call, a mobilisation of sorts, to spread the Pakatan message, before the Sarawak state election and the next General Election (GE-13)?

There are signs that GE-13 is imminent. BN is already capitalising on the petty in-fighting, the foibles, nepotism, cronyism, the bitching and carping within the ranks of Pakatan to gain political mileage.



A multi-pronged attack on Pakatan has already been orchestrated. The senior citizens of Penang are returning their RM100 hardship allowance saying it is tainted money from the proceeds of gambling.

So, who will tell these poor souls that the twin-towers, highways, schools, bridges, hospitals, houses of worships and civil servants wages were funded with treasury monies which include contributions from the duty on alcohol, and proceeds from Sports Toto, bars and massage parlours, all deemed *haram* in Islam?

Should we dismantle these structures and stop all Muslims from being employed in breweries, or bars, hotels, ships and airlines which serve alcohol? Can the bloated civil service accommodate these people?

This London event had an underlying tone of urgency, with questions that were more

searching. This discerning crowd wanted detailed answers.

Quite right too! If leaders expect loyalty, then the public has every right to demand devotion and commitment from their representatives.

Brain drain

One of the participants was concerned about internal security and how to prevent post-election jubilations from escalating into disorder in our streets.

Someone asked about the brain-drain and the steps that Pakatan might take to reverse this trend. Pakatan must realise that without consideration being given for the family structure, then no amount of perks or privileges will get these professionals home. They would like their children to have access and equal rights to a quality education.

The audience was informed of their 'shadow cabinet' on the Pakatan website. These Pakatan politicians scrutinise their corresponding office holders in BN, develop alternative policies, and hold the government to account for its actions and responses. Unfortunately, the Malaysian Parliament does not recognise the institution of a 'Shadow Cabinet'.

Corruption makes victims of all of us and currently, we only treat the symptoms and not the root causes.

The crowd was told of the difference between 'corruption' and 'commission': Corruption is the RM100 offered to the policeman; Commission is the politician who is offered RM100 million. Pakatan says it will implement a top-down approach to tackle corruption, and where department heads have to disclose their assets and property.

Last week, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak (*right*) reminded us that 'there would be a bad impact on people if BN loses power' and said, "There is no other government in the world which has done what the Malaysian government had, is doing or will be doing". Meanwhile, his deputy reassured the Malays that their rights and privileges were preserved in the New Economic Model (NEM).



All countries have a racial problem but most try to eradicate it and call for equality and interaction amongst their different peoples. Not so Malaysia. It perpetuates the racial divide and both the PM and the DPM have substantiated this.

The panel in London need not remind us that Umno is desperate and is using race and religion as its final trump cards. We are aware that the Malays have to change their mind-set. But are the Malays aware of this?

Umno is prepared to condemn the Malays and their families to a life of dependency, without actively seeking to make their lives more productive.

Smoke and mirrors

Most Malaysians do not realise that most Malays do not benefit from the NEM. Any Malay who has tried to make his own way in Malaysia is swimming against the tide, just like the majority of non-Malays. The only Malays who benefit are members of the Umno elite.

The NEM is Malaysia's political 'smoke-and-mirrors'.

If you do not support the right party or donate to the right cause, then you are treated like a pariah in the community. Your contracts are terminated. Opportunities are limited.

In other words, you are accepted only if your face fits.



Malaysia is a country mired in chaos and run along racial and religious lines. Are Malaysians prepared to sleepwalk into another 30 years of this?

Is Pakatan ready to take on the colossal might of the BN machinery? BN with its reserves of taxpayers' cash and manpower, makes the contest like a fight between David and Goliath. We all know the outcome of that battle.

Pakatan may not be perfect, but it is the only hope for a better future for Malaysia. Will you cast your vote at the next election?

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/144343>