

Stretch out your hand to your brothers, DAP
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The results of the 12th General Election have effected a paradigm shift in the land. For the rakyat, it was the sudden realisation that their votes matter after all, that it is possible to remove those that rule badly. For the politicians, especially the arrogant ones, it was the realisation that they are not invincible, that they can be removed by the voters. Now it is government that exists to serve the people, and not the other way round.

In the ensuing catharsis, when people feel vindicated after these past years of misrule, and look forward to a better future under the new politic, there is the great hope that the race-based parties will become increasingly irrelevant and Malaysian political parties will morph into a two-party system as exists in many of the developed countries, so that the people can have a choice of the better Barisan come election time.

The PKR-DAP-PAS coalition (the Barisan Alternative) has offered such a hope, and many people look to it as a great opportunity to start building a truly Malaysian nation, free of the racial divide.

Therefore it came as a rude awakening to hear of Lim Kit Siang's call to boycott the choice of a PAS Menteri Besar in Perak, DAP's bigger elected numbers notwithstanding. And their unwillingness to share out the exco seats with their fellow coalition members, as well as the emphasis on power-sharing along racial lines (a la the Barisan National).

It is the petty, abrasive politics of old. The DAP would have endeared itself to all Malaysians if they had exhibited generosity, humility and magnanimity in victory, as PAS has done elsewhere. Although the boycott has been defused with an apology to the Regent of Perak, damage to the party's image has been done, as evidenced by the massive criticism of the boycott from all over.

The highly respected royal family in Perak has been a beacon of light for fairness, justice and peace in the country, and to show disrespect for their choice smacks of arrogance, which, hopefully, will be a dying trait among the new politicians.

What is wrong with a PAS menteri besar for Perak, or a Malay or anyone else, so long as he or she leads with wisdom and fairness? It matters only to the racists and chauvinists. Incidentally PAS has demonstrated itself to be tolerant and fair to all the communities under their rule, despite their Islamist agenda.

PAS-phobia, especially amongst the non-Muslims, has been well perpetrated by the Barisan National component parties. One only has to take a leaf from Turkey, when the Islamist Party took power amidst much apprehension in that secular nation. The Islamists ruled better than all previous secular governments, so well that they were returned with an overwhelming mandate from the people.

So, to Lim Kit Siang and the Perak DAP, I say you should stretch out your hand to your coalition brothers and rule wisely together, free of the annoying pettiness. Otherwise, shame on you for foregoing this opportunity for nation-building in this country.

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