

Buck up, Umno
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Sometime back, right after the recent general election on why so many Malays voted for the Opposition. There are a lot pointers there that showed Umno leaders why, yet the truth in that letter probably just fell on deaf ears.

History again repeated itself in the recent by-election in Permatang Pauh. Many such comments and constructive criticisms written to the so-called mainstream media never get published and when articulated to our leaders, fall on deaf ears.

There are many reasons why Umno lost so badly:

1. Racial politics - This was so heavily used in this by-election that even many Umno grassroots are sick of it. Even after the general populace rejected this in the recent general election, our leaders failed to acknowledge the fact that racial politics is history, with Umno continuing to use these tactics.

Umno claims it is a party that champions the rights of everybody yet it continues to champion for one race. The UiTM incident proves to our non-Malay friends that we are racist and yet we in Umno continue showing support and accusing our Malay brethren who suggested opening up the university for improvement and making it competitive as 'traitors'.

The non-Malays did not ask for the privilege to study in UiTM. It was merely a proposal by the Selangor MB and yet people raised hell over it. Even the Vice-Chancellor of UiTM supported the unruly behaviour. As a point to mention here, I've interviewed many UiTM students looking for a job and I've yet to be impressed. I personally prefer taking in students from our other universities.

Then we had Ahmad Ismail calling the Chinese 'squatters' in this country in a ceramah at Permatang Pauh recently. What kind of talk and mindset is this? The bottomline is, the general perception now is that we in Umno are indeed racist.

2. Character assassination - Video clips of Saiful swearing on the Quran and accusing Anwar of sodomy were widely broadcast everywhere in Permatang Pauh. We are talking about a 60-plus year-old man with a bad back forcibly sodomising a young man. Its no wonder many find this hard to believe.

To top everything off, we have a report by a reputable doctor saying there was no evidence of sodomy on the complainant. The subsequent lame and silly denials by PUSRAWI's general manager, the pictures of Saiful taken with the DPM's people, the excuses of why Saiful went to the DPM's office and many other reasons all point to only one logical conclusion: a political conspiracy to nab Anwar Ibrahim.

Even though the general population has dismissed this sodomy issue as a political ploy, Umno leaders continue to harp on it. This further helps to strengthen the people's mistrust of Umno and BN.

3. Abusing Islam and using it as a political tool - Saiful's act of swearing on the Quran is a

despicable act. When a person with a sound mind can dismiss this so-called 'oath', we in Umno choose to publicise and support this young man without conducting a thorough investigation. Umno leaders must be made aware of the fact that many Muslims view Saiful's swearing as a blasphemous act of using Islam to gain political mileage.

4. Using the police and ACA to act on those seen to be against the government - At this point in time, the integrity of the police force to act in an unbiased manner is highly questionable. The general population has not much of respect left for the police. This is unfortunate as it is caused by a corrupt leadership and not our day to day policemen on the beat.

The recent events in Bandar Mahkota in Cheras, the arrest of Anwar, the ACA acting swiftly on the Opposition and ignoring the numerous complaints against BN leaders have raised serious concerns of the neutrality of the police.

The police have a duty to the rakyat and must reject being the political tools of the government. The grassroots want change and fairness, irrespective of political affiliation and a neutral police and ACA.

5. The charging of Anwar Ibrahim - In Malaysian law, sodomy, whether consensual or not, is illegal and all participants should be charged. Yet, so far, only Anwar has been charged with consensual sodomy. Why is this? According to the home minister, Saiful was not charged because he reported the sodomy act. In another words, if both parties commit a crime but only one reports it, the other one can get away? What kind of law is this?

This is not only a joke but an insult to the laws of our nation. Yet our leaders seem oblivious to this fact. How do we expect the population to accept the reasons given by our Home Minister? The only thing clear from all these absurdities is that we lack minister with calibre in this country. And that they still seem to think the rakyat are stupid enough to believe their lame excuses.

6. The DNA bill - Too much has been said about the absurd way this flawed bill is being hurried through Parliament. It is not only riddled with loopholes, it is of no benefit to the rakyat and only serves to make a mockery of our democratic system. Again, the government chooses not to listen to us.

This bill is not politically motivated? Even a 3-year-old kid would find this hard to believe.

7. Cancelling projects in Penang - Taking away two major projects, PORR and the LRT is a major betrayal to the people of Penang. By doing this, Umno has sealed its fate in Penang.

It is not that the grassroots in Umno love Anwar when we voted for the Opposition, but we are sick and tired of our leaders' sandiwara, arrogance (Khairy talking about sinking Anwar) bias and unwillingness to listen to the sentiments of the general population. Anwar and Pakatan Rakyat leaders seem a better alternative than our leaders in UMNO.

It is my sincere hope that Umno and BN wakes up to this wake-up call as I can assure you that the whole population shares the same sentiments. If our leaders in Umno continue in this current mode, it is just a matter of time before we became irrelevant to the country.

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