

A misconstrued cry for help
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If there is one good thing that can come out of this Ahmad Ismail controversy it must be the continuing hypocrisy and ignorance of Malaysians, particularly the so-called leadership class.

Firstly, our leaders must learn to respect the openness prevailing in the country which has accorded people the freedom to express his or her opinion, no matter how unsavoury the comments or ideas may be.

Of course, it would be against the law if what you said is tantamount to incitement but this is something we have to prove beyond reasonable doubt that if the words were meant to be an incitement. There has to be sufficient motive.

We all know that we say things according to circumstances and the environment. Strong words are usually uttered by weak people who have no other means to express themselves.

In the case of the Bukit Bendera Umno chief, why can't we interpret the harsh comments as coming from someone who sees that his people are in danger of being oppressed under years of non-Malay rule (with Umno as pallbearers)?

Maybe Ahmad is fed up with the ambivalent response by the top Umno leadership to all his complaints that Gerakan has never given priority to Malay grievances despite ample proof that it is the Malays who need help.

Also, the defeat of BN at the hands of PKR surely proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back. To Umno Malays, this is like getting out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Ahmad's comments are a vocal equivalent of an act of desperation and great helplessness. Penang Umno Malays feel that Mar 8 is the beginning of the end for them because if previously they had been ignored by the Gerakan-led state government, the new DAP-led government would surely give more attention to the non-Malays in the state.

Is it any wonder that they are worried about their future? It would be grossly unfair to say that DAP is marginalising the Malays because the party has never demonstrated any unfairness to the Malays.

However, DAP has also never proven itself to be the saviour of the downtrodden Malays. They have yet to see the party championing their socio-economic needs.

So, to me, the utterances by this Umno leader were simply a cry for help which may be shared by Umno people in Kelantan, Kedah, Selangor, Perak and soon perhaps even Negeri Sembilan.

Instead of joining in the 'Ahmad bashing' that is proving to be very popular these past few days, why not take time to listen to and understand the sentiments behind the harsh comments?

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