

Najib and Muhyiddin must take control
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Dr Jacob George

It is paramount that Umno deputy president, Najib Tun Razak and senior vice president, Muhyiddin Yassin take control of Umno as acting president and acting deputy president this coming week without fail or delay prior to the Dec general assembly.

This will create a 'chain reaction' of stability and when Parliament reconvenes, and for that matter, at the Umno general assembly, whoever wants to challenge the 'status quo' can do so.

I am certain the 'status quo' will survive.

But for the 'status quo' to survive and most importantly survive the next general election, Najib and Muhyiddin must make more than just cosmetic changes. They need to work immediately in setting up a high powered select committee to initiate a comprehensive look at all the issues that need immediate handling, especially issues pertaining to race relations, polarisation and racist bigotry and plan regular audits and post mortems.

They need to repeal draconian legislation like the Internal Security Act 1960, the Official Secrets Act 1985 and similar other acts. We need to close down the Kamunting detention centre and release all the ISA detainees or charge them in an open court with the legislation that we already have.

Najib and Muhyiddin should warn all Umno members that it is not 'business as usual' and that they will see real changes, most importantly, the new leadership's zero tolerance to racist statements. This will show that the new administration is serious in tackling racial bigotry both in the party and the country.

A second team can be initiated to draw up a 'plan of action' to lure in foreign investments and look into fundamental changes in the way we have been doing business and make radical changes so that we will draw in huge FDIs and the country become more competitive as we face insurmountable challenges from our neighbours in the region.

A third group can initiate all forms of action that will address the various 'abuses of power and corruption' in the nation and in particular the civil service. The agenda here is zero tolerance for corruption and abuse of power.

We must return to the 'good old days' where the Federal Constitution was supreme and honoured, there was separation of powers between the organs of state and government, the judiciary was independent and the civil service was professional and impartial, before 'Mahathirism' ruined it all.

Unless these become the immediate framework of change – a change that we can believe in – we will not be able to stop a new political reality in Malaysia.