

**Malaysia must change for the better**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Sept 25, 2008**  
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The government's continued disregard and disdain for the Malaysian public boggles the mind.

It also shows its precipitous descent into a beleaguered mindset of a morally-emaciated misdirected authority, seemingly grasping at whichever convenient straws to prop up its crumbling foundations.

Instead of listening to and reflecting on the wishes and aspirations of an increasingly vocal rakyat, it continues to wallow in a fossilised mentality that 'might is right', as long as it continues to believe and hold on to the majoritarian trump card.

Sadly, but perhaps hopefully this might just change in the next few days or weeks—many Malaysians are praying and hoping for change for the better.

The current leadership appears to subscribe to the view that it alone holds all the puissance and licence for arbitrary diktats of obsolete inequitable laws, hollow-sounding rhetoric and cheap propaganda.

Somehow it seems to have become shell-shocked into an impervious barricade of seeing no evil, hearing no evil but speaking and acting with callous and vilest evil—hitting back with whatever they've got the power to lash out!

It appears to be clinging on to whatever little power it has left—which is dwindling day by day; worse it appears to be losing relevance, in the eyes of an earnest rakyat.

It has inflexibly steeled itself from having to shift gears in a much changed Malaysian political reality since March 8, 2008, that ensconced racial and ethnic divisions which had previously been batted down, are passé.

By steadfastly holding on to the concept of and playing up the divisive if dumbed-down special unequal sectarian rights, the current leadership appears to be foundering on a dessicated landscape of enlightened global visions and aspirations for greater inclusivity and equality—that the quest for basic human rights cannot stop at narrowly-defined sectarian exclusivity or political expediencies.

### **Ketuanan Melayu**

The now much maligned Ketuanan Melayu catchphrase, with its expectant master-follower relationship appears to have lost its jingoistic power to inflame fear and privation for an increasingly sophisticated rakyat, at least for a sizeable number.

It is true that many Malays and bumiputras continue to fear that once this interpretation of exceptional right is taken away from them, they might not be favoured anymore and would be sidelined, even marginalised in their so-called 'own homeland'. This is a very real and rightful concern, and all Malaysians must be mindful that this does not and should never happen.

But I think every thinking Malaysian understands this perspective which has been ingrained into the psyche for so long, that this has become an immovable crutch reinforcing a diffident yet hand-out frame of mind.

We must all work together to ensure that fairness—even if with initial overweening affirmation to reassure our Malay and bumiputra brethren be justly extended—based on social need rather than simply birthright, be the paradigm of the new Malaysian model, with eradication of all leakages and wastages from corrupt and other venal interests.

I strongly believe our economic pie is big enough for all. I believe our collective potential is even greater when we can all work together without unspoken but seething suspicion, envy or disgruntlement.

There's really no necessity for fear of being excluded of fair opportunities for any Malaysian, as I fervently believe that every Malaysian will always have a soft spot for the poor, the marginalised and the truly deprived. 50 years of living together in relative peace and harmony would and should ensure that common sense and goodwill will prevail.

I believe we are more magnanimous and generous than we have been given credit for. A socially-engineered liberalism with an ethnically-blind and equitable social contract, will ensure that untrammelled market forces not be allowed to override the sensitivities and needs of those truly in need.

### **Fundamental rights**

That every Malaysian will be accorded every fundamental right to a decent home, wages, access to basic amenities and health care, basic rights and freedom to associate, to think, to speak, to write and to believe.

That quality and merit must supersede all pretensions of enforced arbitrary allocations, to education, business, housing, employment, even social welfare, which can only make our nation and economy, our productivity and yes, especially our Malaysian nationalistic fervour stronger and more meaningful. That we can all shout out loudly and passionately with one unison voice that we are Bangsa Malaysia!

In a globalised world, this can only add on to our previously unimagined strength, rather than serve as a deadweight anchor dragging us slowly but inexorably into inefficiency, corruption, nepotism, dependency and poorer than can be achieved productivity.

In the past few years, this has become more evident with our sharply declining economic growth as the chasing developing world continues to progress in spite of us and our fantastic head-start.

We're now beginning to showcase our wasted, weighted-down, demoralised human capital achievement, which has now become even more tangible with the rise and rise of resurgent dynamic economies of China, India, Vietnam, Thailand and even Indonesia! With the current financial meltdown and banking debacle, we have to be even more resilient, otherwise we can expect worse to come.

Ketuanan Rakyat must now be the new shibboleth for Malaysians now more confident of and attuned to fairplay and global competition.

We must continue to reinforce and burnish this quest for greater personal and national achievement, empowerment and excellence. We must learn to aspire to be world-beaters and not simply be content as jaguh kampung (village champions).

Malaysia Boleh and must change for the better!

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