

'1Malaysia' won't happen without sacrifices
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There is still a strong sentimentality and adherence to one's racial identity and as a result, there is a lot of reluctance and resistance to change for the sake of a truly united nation. People want the racial barriers to be removed on one hand but on the other hand, feel very apprehensive of what may happen to some of their 'treasured interests'.

The reason, I suppose, is due to the absence of a clear direction as to how national policies to introduce the '1Malaysia' concept to the people is going to be carried out in a fair and equitable manner. One most important area to start with, is education.

What has so far been carried out, is to blast off '1Malaysia' without setting a proper course for its intended direction and destination. What is the vision and mission of this 'solidarity in unity' bold venture?

A single-stream school system is definitely one of the bold steps in the right direction to implement the ideas of 'one nation, one people'. However, the present education policy has to change drastically to pave the way for a policy that is more conducive to the acceptance of each other, irrespective of our cultural and religious differences.

A single national school system should do away with any form of religious or racial indoctrination. A single school system must reflect the racial composition of the nation in both the teaching profession and those formulating the education policies and guidelines.

The question which we should ask ourselves is, how much are we willing to give up or sacrifice to bring about the changes to the current mindset and direction that has been charted and practised for the past 50 years?

One has to bear in mind that without making big sacrifices, expecting tremendous gains are just illusions or 'virtual reality'. Sometimes we have to give up something we cherish in order to get something much better. No pain, no gain.

If the government is not willing break away from racist politics that more or less keeps the people segregated in thought and behaviour, nothing is going to move or bring about any confidence in the people to even consider or contemplate the necessary changes to instill '1Malaysia' into everyone.

Thus, is BN willing to do away with race-based political parties and form a single party reflecting the racial composition of the nation? It is a big sacrifice for a nation to strive as one.

Are we still going to be segregated by race and religion in documents and personal identity cards? What about exercising more religious tolerance and acceptance without any fear of infringement or losing out?

Are institutes of higher learning going to remove the barriers that obstruct racial integration?

These essential elements of change are but a few and there are many other sensitive areas that need close study and careful implementation to avoid any antagonism or ill-feelings.

If there is no serious and sincere commitment to go the full distance, then I would consider '1Malaysia' to be another flash in the pan.

Contain corruption at all levels to allow a smooth implementation of '1Malaysia' otherwise the allocated funds cannot serve their intended purpose and objectives.

If '1Malaysia' is set off on its course successfully, perhaps one day we may all proudly proclaim: Malaysia has matured. Singapore has done it, the US has done it, we can also do it.

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