

'Bolehland' now seen as the 'Tak Bolehland'

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The slogan 'Malaysia Boleh' was coined by Dr Mahathir Mohamad when he was the prime minister is now a joke. Ironically, the good intent of the overly farsighted Tun to inculcate confidence among Malaysians was the beginning of the decline or fall of Malaysia as a progressive society. Malaysians became bubble-headed when Mahathir commenced a series of ego-boosting mega-projects culminating with a journey into space.

I am not interested to outline Mahathir's achievements that had helped to cultivate a 'super-ego' amongst many Malaysians today who had made it rich or powerful irrespective of their paths or their ways. Under Tun M, Malaysians from all walks of life and race adopted a 'Bolehland' style whereby nothing stood in the way of determination and will. The Machiavellian theory of 'the end justifies the means' has been practiced and adopted by all and sundry from crooks to bigots.

The value system of Malaysians had been destroyed when the pillars of the judiciary were tampered with. The skepticism of the general public on our value system has led to a gradual disintegration of our social order, legal structure and administrative culture. We were so obsessed with success that we failed to uphold the basic decency of truth and justice. We became so arrogant that we thought the world is beneath our feet and is for us to conquer.

Our 'Bolehland' allows us to justify any amendment of the constitutions, the law and even interference with state institutions with little regard for tradition, convention and the implications. We were so arrogant that many politicians, government officials, businessman etc claimed that the rules, laws and everything else could be changed. And indeed changes were made and the rules of the games changed when it suited the masters. We have little regard or respect for fundamentals or ground rules.

Instances of businessmen who had failed in their projects or business ventures and who were rescued by the stroke of the pen were rampant. Whenever there was a political struggle, money in cash or in any form became the sole factor that determined the level of support and the ultimate victor. The line between statesmen and businessmen was erased when Tun M blatantly advocated the pride of being rich or super-rich with a special emphasis on 'capital M'. Unfortunately, although Tun M is a good public speaker, he has failed to emphasise the right manner and approach in acquiring wealth.

The virtues and ethics of business was not well-articulated. Many approached business as a 'who-you-know' rather than a 'what you know'. Playing golf or pulling the right strings or 'cables' became the rule of the day. There was relatively lesser emphasis on productivity or delivery compared to the emphasis on opportunities to profit. Projects were created or launched not out of need or necessities of the majority but only to facilitate or create an opportunity to make a small minority wealthy.

In all fairness, it was Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who brought Malaysians to their senses. Abdullah had admitted that he may not be smarter than Tun M but he did try to remedy and rectify the mistakes and right the wrongs. He may have been accused of many things such as 'flip-flops' , 'Sleeping Beauty' etc but he is definitely sincere and genuine in trying to bring Malaysians down to earth to the reality and inability of the Malaysia Bolehland. It was Abdullah who allowed a greater transparency and democracy in our Malaysian political

sphere.

Abdullah's liberal approach towards the opposition allowed Mahathir to interfere and influence the people to return BN to power with a smaller majority in the last general election. It was Mahathir who had promised not to interfere with the administration if and when he retires. It was also Mahathir who had openly and defiantly advocated that BN be returned with a lesser than two-thirds majority prior to the 2008 general election.

Abdullah's sincerity and good intent was untimely and he was not given sufficient time to leave his mark. It is now up to Najib Abdul Razak to right the wrongs and correct the mistakes of the past leadership.

Unfortunately our economics fundamentals are facing gradual disintegration with the exhaustion of our natural resources with particular reference to the oil. Politically, we are becoming more 'barbaric' where we are becoming less civil to one another. Even the man-on-the-street is becoming nastier and more rebellious.

DAP, PAS and PKR struck the political jackpot in the March 8, 2008 general election and they are getting bigheaded now. All their energy and efforts are now orchestrated towards bringing about the downfall of the BN government. They will stoop as low as they can go - they will distort, twist or spin. They will play the racial or religious card to the hilt. This is the moment they have been waiting for....

Poor Najib! He is in the least admirable situation. His '1Malaysia' plan is facing resistance from within. His attempt to hold the country together is seen to be a sign of weakness instead.

Meanwhile, 'Malaysia Bolehland' is now seen as the 'Tak Bolehland'. We are unable to do menial, labour, house chores etc. We are no longer able to be a waiter or a waitress to serve each other. We are more of rent-seekers - no longer producers. Malaysia is no longer competitive and attractive for investors.

There are more drug abusers than baby boomers. The baby boomers grew up with privileges and affluence. They expect the country to grow and improve in time. Unfortunately they are in for a shock. So it is time for us to pull up our socks and join forces to overcome the many social, political and economical bubbles that are about to burst. There are going to be more losers than winners.

In the meantime, let's take a deep breath. Najib is the man with the experience and astuteness to bring us out of this gradual path to doom. He has outlined the path and the solutions for us to walk together. Believe it or not. It is your choice or your funeral.

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