

Return Of Mahathirism Triumphant

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Last week, Mahathir asked why I hated him so much. Yesterday, he asked why I am so afraid of him.

It is neither. As I had said on Saturday, "like three former Prime Ministers, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Hussein and Tun Abdullah and the majority of Malaysians in 2012, I am opposed to Mahathirism and its return to Malaysian politics in the 13th general election".

Mahathir is in his cynical best.

Tongue-in-cheek, he made the grandiloquent announcement that "Mahathirism" is dead, that it "died" when Abdullah took over from him as Prime Minister in 2003.

In actual fact, "Mahathirism" is not only alive and thriving, the return of Mahathirism is enjoying its most triumphant phase since the unceremonious exit of Abdullah as Prime Minister and his replacement by Najib Razak 39 months ago.

This is most evident by the almost ceaseless spouting of "Mahathirism" recently, viz:

- Mahathir's Sunday interview with *Mingguan Malaysia* where he castigated Malay "kebodohan" (stupidity) resulting in a major ethnic group bowing down to demands of minority groups, which included the government recognition of certificates by Tunku Abdul Rahman College (TARC), and claiming that the community had failed to "exploit its majority since Independence to consolidate power";

- his speech in Penang last night that if Barisan Nasional is rejected in the 13th General Election, the Opposition will destroy the country;

- his recent stoking of racial fears among the Malays with his warnings and baseless allegations that

- (i) Malay will lose power if Umno loses next general election;

- (ii) that Najib is a weak Prime Minister and reforms could spark unrest;

- (iii) that the 13GE will be about race and that the Chinese voters are the kingmakers for the 13GE and will decide who forms the government.

The question at issue is whether the forces representing the "Return of Mahathirism Triumphant" is at the core of the massive anti-national conspiracy of lies and falsehoods to create racial distrust, suspicion, panic and fear particularly among the Malays in the 13GE, totally in utter disregard of their destructive effects on 54-years of nation building, including the Bangsa Malaysia concept of Vision 2020 as well as Najib's 1Malaysia concept.

Yesterday provided a classic example of such dangerous, racist, anti-national and treacherous campaign tactics when the UMNO publication, *Utusan Malaysia* plumed a new depth of dishonest and unethical journalism and front-paged the lie that DAP would contest 90 of the 222 parliamentary seats in the 13GE to dominate Pakatan Rakyat and appoint the Prime Minister.

Although DAP and Pakatan Rakyat leaders had yesterday itself denied and debunked the Utusan report as "utterly wild and baseless", and I said in my media statement that although final seat allocations between Pakatan Rakyat parties have still to be fully completed, "DAP is not contemplating contesting more than 60 parliamentary seats or less than 28 per cent of the total 222 parliamentary seats, Utusan Malaysia completely ignored these denials and today continued to publish reports and articles on the basis that its lies about "DAP to contest 90 seats" are true!

This is one example of "Return of Mahathirism Triumphant" at its worst and most irresponsible!

It will be interesting to find out how many Malaysians believe Mahathir or agree with him that "Mahathirism" died when Abdullah took over as Prime Minister.

Mahathir charged that Abdullah "changed UMNO, the BN and the Government so much that they no longer resemble the institutions I used to know" and he had to resign from UMNO.

Abdullah's greatest tragedy is his failure to dismantle the Mahathirish architecture of racism, authoritarianism, corruption and cronyism to make the return of Mahathirism (as distinct from the return of Mahathir) an impossible agenda.

This is now among the issues that have to be resolved in the 13GE – for a new start in Malaysia that could put the Mahathirish past of abuses of power, corruption and cronyism completely behind the country, where Malaysians regardless of race, religion, class, region, gender or age could come together in a common national endeavour as on Bersih 3.0 on April 28 to build a united, harmonious, democratic, just, competitive, progressive and clean Malaysian nation.

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