

National Day Theme Wrong And Inappropriate
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The Information Minister, Dr. Rais Yatim is defending the indefensible when he takes to Twitter to ask why "Janji Ditepati" cannot be used as this year's National Day/Malaysia Day theme.

Firstly, Rais' claim that "Malaysia has truly arrived as an achieving nation after 55 years of independence" is highly controversial and debatable, for if this is true, the Prime Minister Najib Razak would not gain the reputation of being the most indecisive Prime Minister in the nation's history who keeps postponing his plan to hold the next general election to win a personal mandate for his premiership for fear of ending up in the Opposition benches or toppled within UMNO like his predecessor Abdullah.

In fact, probably more could be written about how the slogan of "Janji Ditepati" had failed rather than succeeded in 55 years after Merdeka and 49 years after Malaysia – whether in building a united, harmonious, democratic, progressive and competitive Malaysia; or in fulfilling Najib's three-year promises of 1Malaysia Government Transformation Programme (GTP) whether in reducing crime, fighting corruption or carrying out meaningful government, economic and political transformation for Malaysia to take her rightful place in international society and achieve the status of a normal democratic country.

I remember when I visited Sabah in 1978, I had warned that Sabah faced three grave problems – the illegal immigrant problem which I had cited had reached 140,000, the crime situation and grave problem of corruption.

All these three problems have gone from bad to worse in the past four decades, with the illegal immigrant problem mushrooming to 1.5 million to 1.9 million making native Sabahans foreigners in their own land, while crime and corruption have worsened by leaps and bounds.

And Sabahans are still waiting for the next step in the establishment of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into illegal immigrants in Sabah although they have grave reservations that it could really resolve the long-standing problem in the state.

Is this "Janji Ditepati"?

However, the most fatal objection to the use of the "Janji Ditepati" slogan as the National Day/Malaysia Day theme is not whether it is factually correct or otherwise, but because of two strong reasons: firstly, it is wrong and inappropriate to use a UMNO/Barisan Nasional slogan for a National Day/Malaysia Day theme and secondly, it is anti-national, divisive rather than unifying the people, presenting Najib as Prime Minister for UMNO/BN only and not all Malaysians!

National Day/Malaysia Day should be national occasions for all Malaysians, regardless of race, religion, region or politics to come together as one people, and no Malaysian or group should be alienated or marginalized because it has been hijacked by UMNO/Barisan and turned into an exclusive UMNO/BN affair.

If UMNO/BN is allowed to hijack National Day/Malaysia Day, is Rais then admitting that Najib is only Prime Minister for UMNO/BN and not all Malaysians?

No wonder there is overwhelming public support for the Pakatan Rakyat call for a change of the National Day/Malaysia Day theme (as well as the horrendous rojak National Day logo), which is reflected in the Sinar Harian online poll where in less than 48 hours, 2,359 or 84% out of 2,811 respondents supported the change of theme with only 452 or 16% opposing it.

This is an important distinction which even school children would understand. It really baffles me, and I am sure thinking patriotic Malaysians, why it eludes Rais and the UMNO/BN Ministers and leaders who are unable to grasp such simple issues of right and wrong, national and anti-national?

No wonder Malaysia under the continued UMNO/BN rule is in such a mess, whether in nation-building, politically, economically, educationally or socially.

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