

Do not miss the silver lining

PS-8
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CAN there be rights and wrongs in politics? The answer is a resounding “no”, but there is always the expectation from citizens that whomever they voted for to lead the country should be righteous and do the right thing.

After prolonged suspense, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was appointed the 10th prime minister (PM) and people of all faiths rejoiced. Then, there was another pause before the Cabinet line-up was announced, but this time there were questions and suspicions raised.

The appointments were ridiculed and fear gripped netizens as to whether the fiasco of post GE14 (14th general election) was returning, and the anxiety was only to be expected.

However, senior leaders, observers and political theorists felt the negative outpourings as premature and that the PM should be given time to prove himself.

As with the appointment of Cabinet ministers, I suppose in a marriage of convenience, there is no such thing as a perfect partner, and the PM had to do what it took to form the government.

The people who criticised him for

the appointments should analyse the situation and make an informed assessment as to what must have gone into the hours and days of deliberation before the appointments were announced.

It is not an easy task and I would not want to be in such a situation. No doubt, there were candidates who lost in the 15th general election who were given positions, but it may not have been entirely the PM's call as he was reliant on the coalition heads to make the dicey decisions.

Of great concern is the billions of ringgit used without proper paper trails while the country is on a decline and the people struggling to make ends meet.

The PM has a major task at hand to bring to justice those who squandered people's money blatantly and are still seeking the highest office in the country.

Politics is never easy nor straight. What appears white may just be an illusion, and the truth may be hidden in an abyss, which may not surface in our lifetime.

As netizens, apart from keeping our eyes and ears open, we hope government servants holding high office will report any abuse of power and authority at every level



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of dealings. Corruption is a disease but it is not terminal, it can be weeded out systematically with a strategic approach and involvement of civil societies.

There is no doubt that the active participation of citizens is fundamental to preventing corruption and promoting transparency.

Now with advanced social networks and increased access to information, there is enormous potential to strengthen integrity in our country.

Citizens can collaborate with civil societies that have been exemplary in promoting transparency and public integrity through the advancement of access to information laws, monitoring of government spending, tracking of campaign funds and reporting acts of corruption.

The role of the private sector cannot also be downplayed. Scandals tend to place the spotlight on corrupt individuals and, unfortunately, ignore the fact that for every contract obtained with a bribe, there were businesses that refused to pay. However, declarations and pledges displayed covertly at the premises of

organisations alone will not suffice in this war against corruption.

We have seen countries go down due to corruption, and Sri Lanka is a stark example. A combination of factors including corruption, preferential treatment of connections, dependence on debt finance and explosive borrowings from China pushed Sri Lanka into economic collapse. Political instability only prolonged the crisis, provoking violence and unrest.

A United Nations report on corruption states that corruption is collective rather than an individual act, going beyond private gain to encompass broader interests and benefits within political systems.

It further adds that corruption is a symptom of wider governance dynamics, and is likely to thrive in conditions where accountability is weak and people have too much discretion.

Now that we know the root of the evil, it is up to the PM to tackle them and make Malaysia great again.

Meanwhile, let us sit tight and allow the PM, who waited almost all his life for this opportunity, to show what he can do.

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