

## **Nothing stands in Mahathir's way**

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**By CT Ali**

Like Abdullah, Najib is now facing Dr Mahathir Mohamad, albeit in a more civilised and structured manner.

A disturbing reality in Malaysia today is our constant worry of what tomorrow will bring to our country, for our people and most worrying of all, for our future.

We start 2014 with that most worrying of all our concerns:

Do we have, in Najib Tun Razak, a leader capable of providing this nation with the leadership it must have if we are to survive the annus horribilis that we all went through in 2013?

This is not the frivolous musing of a pro-Pakatan Rakyat anti-Umno/BN activist whose main preoccupation is finding fault with the Barisan Nasional government.

Before we go into corruption, money politics and everything else that is wrong about the government, let us first ask ourself if there is someone, anyone, in government today in whom we trust.

Someone whom we believe will have our interest at heart? Is there someone who has the intellect, the empathy and the humility to lead?

This is about leadership of our nation.

From the outcome of the last general election it is clear that the majority of our people have not agreed that the leader chosen by Umno, and by default that chosen by Barisan Nasional, namely Najib Tun Razak, is the leader they want.

Najib did not secure the popular mandate from the people to form the government.

If the people have made their choice, what then has the Umno-led Barisan Nasional decided? Will Umno and BN continue with a leader that has been rejected by a majority of the electorate, or has a process started to find a replacement for Najib?

The truth lies somewhere in the mass of contradictions and conjectures that is Umno and BN.

Common sense will tell you that the process for change within Umno started after the calamitous 12th general election in March 2008 when Abdullah Ahmad Badawi won a second term as Prime Minister with a reduced majority.

A year later in April 2009 Abdullah tendered his resignation. We are familiar with the

circumstances of Abdullah's resignation and we only need to look at the circumstances surrounding Najib today to see that he, too, is now in similar circumstances.

Abdullah had his son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin to thank for his demise, Najib has his wife Rosmah. Like Abdullah, many in Umno are now undermining Najib.

Like Abdullah, Najib is now facing Dr Mahathir Mohamad, albeit in a more civilised and structured manner.

Leaders of branches, divisions and states as well Umno's warlords are all lining up their allegiance and their "periuk nasi" according to their take on whether Najib or Mahathir will carry the day when push comes to shove within Umno.

### **Wait and hide**

Mahathir relishes a battle. Najib will do what he always does in any fight: wait, hide, wait, hide and still wait until a winner emerges, and if Mahathir has the numbers, Najib will lose.

Najib has never seen himself as a contender to any position – not even to wear the trousers in his own home.

Najib will prefer to feign disinterest, imagine himself to be above the fray of internal politics, even play dead, anything but be confrontational.

For me there is no doubt about the outcome. Who Mahathir decides will be King will be King. Whether it will be Muhyiddin Yassin, Mukriz Mahathir or Mahathir himself is to be seen but in the scheme of things to come, you can be assured that Umno will come out of this whole sordid episode wiser.

We have the best seat in the house to see this political drama unfold before our eyes.

When Umno wants to pillage and plunder our nation, they do so with a vengeance and nothing stands in their way – not the police, not MACC, not even the Judiciary. Public opinion be damn.

When they want to exert their political dominance, they do so from the ground up, and populating the nation with bumiputeras was the logical place to start.

And if this meant importing "pendatangs" who will become bumiputeras by the millions, so be it, and this they have done to perfection!

And if they want to politically dominate Malaysia for the next half century as they have done in the last half – and they do! – you can be rest assured that they can and will do so with a focus that will exclude all other considerations but that which matters to Umno.

And who is Najib Tun Razak to stand in Umno's way?

I do not hold any doubt that Umno will succeed in its endeavours to cleanse itself of those riff-raff that passes for Umno's first-tier leaders today by virtue of their parentage or

political pedigree.

What ultimately matters in Umno is that you take care of Umno first and Umno will take care of you – and nobody is a disciple of that belief more than Mahathir.

In his 22 years as leader of Umno, his focus was to have power reside within him, which, by extension of him being the leader of Umno, meant that political power resides within Umno.

Nothing stood in Mahathir's way – not the people's interest, not the opposition's interest, not even his wife or family!

You have to respect that man's determination and single-minded focus on the task then at hand – Machiavellian he may be but 20 years as Prime Minister of Malaysia is an achievement by any criteria.

### **Smart leader**

Once again Umno will have to up its ante and raise above the mediocrity of a leader who has no clue as to what he is doing in government and has no sense of what is unfolding around him.

We have given our verdict of Najib. Let us now see what Umno will do to a leader who does not lead, a president who does not preside, a Malay who appealed to the Chinese at the last election for support and was severely rebuffed, a Malaysian who talks of 1Malaysia when Umno wants 1Melayu and a husband who stands helpless in the face of a wife who dominates.

The only thing that stands in Mahathir's path is his age – or to be more exact – will his health hold up to being numero uno in Umno.

No doubt he will have Mukhriz and others with him, but Mahathir will be sorely tested by the effort needed to take Malaysia out of the conundrum that it has fallen into after his exit.

I have no affection for the manner Mahathir has conducted himself in the past but having seen what has come after him, I yearn for the crisp sure and firm focus he had been doing for what is best for Malaysia.

Yes, he did not always succeed but in the times that he did, none of his successors have been able to emulate his efforts.

What will keep Mahathir in check today is social media. He will now have to answer directly to the people for everything he does.

Another Ops Lallang is simply impossible to arrange given the ability of the people to mobilise opposition to anything they disagree with.

Cronyism ala Mahathir would be exposed before it could even be executed. Say what you like about the old man but he knows what is expected of him and he knows the pulse of the

nation.

He is on top of everything. And most critical of all, nobody in cabinet or government second-guesses him.

If there is corruption it is because he allows it. If there is cronyism or money politics it is because he said yes to it. And by any criteria I would rather have that than the wholesale jamboree of cronyism, corruption and money politics now being done by politicians in government or opposition.

Since Mahathir left we have regressed. The point is this – such is our present situation that a return to Mahathir can only do us good, and Umno can do away with the riff-raff that now passes for Umno's first-tier leadership.

Mahathir is smart enough to know what the people want and he will deliver and make Umno into the likeness of the party our people aspire to – maybe not too open, maybe not too transparent – but it will be a government that will deliver the future that the people aspire.

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