

Mahathir's Malaysia Is Bouncing Back

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) – As I randomly picked ‘The Economist’ today and flipped through its pages, an advertisement beamed with pride: “Malaysia: Bullish on Bouncing Back”.

It went on to say how the country endured dark days, obviously referring to the label of kleptocracy for the previous government and everything that was linked to it, including the 1Malaysia Development Fund (1MDB) fiasco and the uncertainty that it brought about.

‘We had to right the wrong. So, in the recent general election, we Malaysians finally said enough is enough, and stood together to bring the country back on track, back into the light – back to a stable future,’ it said.

Each and every line of the advertisement struck a chord in my heart, more so when I see it in such a respectable magazine.

At the very moment, none of the announcement made in the RM314.5 billion 2019 Budget yesterday came to mind, neither the debt level, budget deficit nor the handouts. No, that does not mean that I am undermining the Budget or the need for it.

This is me, merely being an ordinary citizen and feeling proud of how the nation has come together making history with a 93-old nonagenarian, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as its pillar under the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition.

Hence, the constant question and allegation that the PH-led administration has not done anything substantial since coming to power or delivering its election promises, simply does not make sense and is pure ignorance.

And I shall not start on how its Budget is being rubbished by some, except that Rome was not built in a day.

One just needs to check on social media, on how many voters out there exercising their democratic rights without reading a single line of the PH election manifesto. They only had one motive -- to change the government.

Yes, we did not see the ringgit bouncing back to the level that would bring cheers to those who would benefit from it, neither did the stock market shoot up making instant millionaires.

But, it made Malaysians proud of the nation by setting an example that will go down in history on how an undeserving government can be changed without shedding blood or waging a war.

Hence, if at all something really matters for an ordinary citizen like me, it is the feeling of being proud of the nation -- not only in Malaysia but also when I step out of the borders.

The country is being re-painted positively on the world stage. The voice of a small nation of 30 million people is roaring yet again from domestic and global issues.

And I can't see anyone else besides the world's oldest leader, fondly called "CheDet", pulling it through.

As aptly put by Tashy Sukumaran of the South China Morning Post: "Love him or hate him – and there seem to be very few bodies who fall in the middle of that spectrum – anyone would be hard-pressed to deny that Mahathir has nothing but fierce love for Malaysia.

"Some would argue he views the nation as a foil to his ego, but patriotism remains patriotism, and the chipping away of Malaysia's legacy – Mahathir's legacy – strikes a chord

with the nonagenarian," she wrote on his comeback to politics after 15 years.

The PH government under his leadership is now seeking three years to restore Malaysia back to fiscal health.

It hopes to bring the fiscal deficit to 3.4 per cent in 2019, 3.0 per cent in 2020 and 2.8 per cent in 2021.

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said yesterday: "Let our love for our country unite us, our challenges make us stronger and our confidence awaken Malaysia as an Asian Tiger all over again."

With that I believe, Mahathir's Malaysia is bouncing back, and is bouncing back stronger than ever before.

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