

Gerakan Tanah Air: A Malay dilemma?

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Letter to the Editor

The week-old Gerakan Tanah Air (GTA) seems to be drawing a lot of flak. The naysayers are aplenty. From politicians and editors to so-called analysts and armchair critics.

But why so much fuss if as touted the movement is destined to fail?

Hence, why I have always maintained that GTA must be seen from a kaleidoscopic perspective. Much of the criticism seems to be centred around the so-called “racism, Malay-centric effect that GTA carries” or “... another racially based-political outfit in an already highly-charged environment”.

But what about the poignant target of GTA? Why not look at what the movement’s head had stated GTA has to offer?

The focus should not be solely on Dr Mahathir Mohamad but rather the message he carries.

GTA aims to unseat Umno. Clearly it wishes to ensure that the Malay masses have a suitable alternative.

Give it a thought. Umno, PAS, Bersatu (to a much lesser degree since it now brands itself as a multiracial party) are all Malay-based parties which are currently in government but are strange bedfellows.

The latest littoral combat ship (LCS) scandal that has come home to harbour (no pun intended), is testament to that.

Amanah, thought to be a Malay party, is seen as too subservient to DAP which we all know will not be able to endear itself to the rural Malays.

Too many scare stories in Felda settlements by Umno has put paid to that. Hence, why, without a shadow of doubt, one must admit that only the Malays will know what the Malays need.

Too many of the judgments passed “post-GTA” are based on what we perceive as the general populace. But the core voters are ubiquitous in far-flung rural areas deep in the Malay belts of Kelantan, Perak, Johor, Pahang, and Kedah.

This is the aim of GTA. An alternative for Malays in place of traditional Malay-based parties in constituencies where Pakatan Harapan (PH) and/or multiracial parties don't have a prayer.

Many complaints are aimed at Mahathir. Some say a leopard cannot change its spots.

But harken back to PH's fleeting 22-month reign. It is not by fluke that the one standing institution, the judiciary, is the final bastion.

To that, at the very least, we should be grateful. How then about the return of media freedom? The ability of the media to report without fear or favour post GE-14 is also to be attributed to the two-time premier.

The uncovering of various scandals, abuse of power cases, changing of the old guards, empowering of civil servants, appointment of new capable leaders at various organisations. The list goes on.

Are we openly saying it was not due to Mahathir's second coming?

But many still choose to lay blame on Mahathir's presence at the "highly contentious Malay Dignity Congress in 2019".

That too is a one-sided comment. Why not mention the irrefutable fact that at the very same congress the statesman chose to 'advise' the Malays on their weakness and lazy attitude?

In the same vein, post-Sheraton Move, why don't the critics point to Mahathir's unwavering stand to defend the rakyat's mandate despite offers to hold on to the coveted PM's post?

There always seems to be this myopic view that whatever Mahathir does or implements is one of his own Machiavellian ideas.

But why not call it as it seems. Why not stick to what exactly was announced?

Why not GTA?

1. A Malay mass movement of parties, non-governmental organisations, capable professionals with an aim to unseat Umno.
2. The people's movement for a clean and corrupt-free government.
3. A movement with an aim to ensure all other races in Malaysia are treated equally as per the boundaries set within the Federal Constitution.

Whether we like it or not, the reality is set. Malaysia is a multiracial country. We are a heaving state of 32 million persons out of which 69.9% are Malay-Bumiputera.

We cannot, and must not, make the mistake of tailoring our outlook based on what we see/hear/like/subscribe to on social media alone.

The reality on the ground is that a mass movement led by capable, qualified, good Malays is needed for a stable government.

This is not purely politics, but survival of the Malays which will eventually bode well for Malaysia.

And that is what GTA and Mahathir stand for. Maybe, just maybe, that will end the Malay dilemma.

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