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The quest for authentic leaders



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LEADERSHIP: If people cannot look to politicians as role models of statesmanship, then they have to look elsewhere

IN the aftermath of the elections, there is the clean-up of posters and bunting and all kinds of mess. But there are also other kinds of clean-up which need to be done.

The lambasting of everything and everyone else because targets are not achieved becomes a kind of desperate ploy to appease various stakeholders.

Poor political mindset is based on the world view of nostalgia of the past and distorted imagination of future scenarios.

Positive mindsets can be moulded by the clarification of principles, values, ways forward and focus on strengthening of national character of virtues and wisdom.

There is a prevalent blame syndrome. Blame of others, self-blame, blame the past and blame the future.

Of course, some blame the experts and the political strategists. As there was a celebrative mood before the elections, there is despondency among all parties and individuals.

In a strange way, all parties involved are winners, but yet all are losers. Everyone worked hard. Everyone gave their best. Everyone had high expectations. Everyone who lost has to accept defeat. Everyone who won has to be magnanimous.

The people, too, are tired. The blame game must end sometime because the audience as well as the actors suffered mental fatigue, some kind of post-election depression.

Responsible leaders have to engage all parties in group psychological counselling and political healing lest there are widespread cases of cognitive confusion and mental sickness.

The election is supposed to be elegant and we are supposed to reach our higher selves. We are supposed to respect leaders who lead us to higher levels of consciousness, existence and elegance.

We acknowledge our democratic capital. We lauded our democratic experiences. We boast to the world the supremacy and rightness of our ways. If we do not handle victory and defeat wisely, we may escalate and prolong public psychological depression.

If we have no strategies of being confidently constructive and soundly mature, we

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cannot tell our story of the excellence of a people. The problem is the people are fine but there are leaders and non-leaders who instigate people to be ill.

When the story is told of the 13 general elections, beyond the political analysts and other pundits, there will be more accurate versions of ideas, events, personalities, parties, factors, immediate and long-term causes of success and failures.

Historical narrative will go beyond the journalistic narrow and shallow reports, beyond fallacies and fiction. From history we will have the advantage of perspective.

If people cannot look to politicians as role models of statesmanship, then they have to look elsewhere.

When the younger generation search for role models, it is clear that they need to look at many role models and emulate the leaders for their different strengths: scholars for their passion for knowledge, the scientist for their scientific minds, the civil servants for their public service, the trade union leaders for their workers' rights and dignity, preachers for religious guidance, the ordinary people for their patience and goodwill, statesmen for their inspiring diplomacy and politicians for what?

Politicians who have a combination of the qualities could be among the most revered of leaders, but many will lose the opportunity to be role models long remembered.

In times of high expectations, confusion and conflicts, true leaders will emerge. Such leaders are expected to be wiser than the pack.

In such times, level-headed followers are expected to be courageous. The wise leaders will rise from the leaders of the future as well as the reemergence of leaders from the past.

It is a law of social change that those who are wise and bold will rise up to the occasion and will not be bedazzled by the fiction of those who are in power and in control of resources.

What more do the people want? The people want true leaders.

The people do not want hate-mongers, creation of eternal dominance fallacy and fiction, religious bigotry, blatant and subtle signs of religious or cultural bigotry, threats, the culture of fear and continuing spin.

The people know and indulge the political mercenaries, the spin doctors, the merchants of doubt and the hidden persuaders.

The people want servant leadership. The people want the rule of law. The educated citizenry -- and Malaysia has everyone schooled, so the people want scholar gentlemen and not "intellectual barbarians" or whining and pining leaders.

The people want to move ahead unmanipulated and build a great society with sustainable resources and will, for the future generation, be a shining example to the world.



Voters casting their ballots during the general election in Pekan on Sunday.

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