

Rising Waters

Written by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah
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The departure of Dato' Nasarudin Hashim to PKR is another blow to Umno after March 8. It follows closely upon our defeats in Permatang Pauh and in Kuala Terengganu and confirms a downward trend in support for Umno since the General Elections.

Umno, for many of us, has been more than simply a political party. In a better day it was also a social movement inspired by ideals of service. As members we felt part of something larger than ourselves, part of a noble cause within which we formed many lasting friendships across the country. Today's party is barely recognizable to those who joined that party.

Still it is sad to hear of a good man and a friend leaving the party. Dato' Nasarudin, an honest and capable man with deep roots in Umno, gives two reasons for his decision. He cites "the direction of the public's support since the 12th General Election in March 2008" and "the condition (of) UMNO and its leadership." The results of the 12th General Election were a blow, but what appears to have moved Dato' Nasarudin is what has happened, or rather has failed to happen, since then. The party continues to come apart and the government to lose support. Not a single effort at party reform has seen the light of day while tired leaders recycle tired formulas. Indeed the leadership is part of the problem.

It's one thing to have found ourselves waist high in water last March. It's another to observe the waters rising steadily almost a year later. Little wonder that our members at all levels are losing confidence in the future of the party. Because of this I do not think it is right for our leaders to play down the significance of our losing Nasarudin, or to belittle his intentions. That would be to make the same mistake as to play down the significance of our now being unable to win elections.

I'll keep saying this: real confidence is built on an understanding of the truth. It means being open about our problems so that we can address them directly. This is a painful process that can only be mediated by leaders of transparent character, who do not owe their authority to money.

Bertambah dalam

Susulan PRU 8hb Mac serta ketewasan di Permatang Pauh serta Kuala Terengganu, satu lagi tamparan menyinggahi 'pipi' Umno dengan 'lompatan' Dato' Nasarudin Hashim ke kem PKR. Sahihlah betapa sokongan terhadap Umno kini dalam trend menurun.

Bagi kebanyakan kita, Umno bukan sekadar parti politik. Organisasi itu pernah gah sebagai pergerakan sosial yang digagaskan atas tonggak kesediaan berkhidmat. Para ahli Umno berasa kita sesungguhnya sebahagian daripada suatu yang lebih besar, mulia dan dalam wadahnya, terjalin persahabatan berpanjangan di seantero negara. Tetapi itu dulu. Sayang sungguh, kelibat kesohoran itu tak kelihatan lagi kepada kalangan yang menganggotainya kini.

Biarpun begitu, kita tetap sedih mendengar ada seorang insan baik dan juga rakan, yang baru berpatah arang berkerat rotan. Dua alasan diberikan oleh Dato' Nasarudin, seorang yang ikhlas lagi berwibawa dan yang bagaikan sudah bertunjang dalam Umno, atas keputusannya ialah "trend sokongan umum sejak PRU12 Mac 2008 lalu" dan "keadaan UMNO serta kepimpinannya." Benar, keputusan PRU12 satu tamparan hebat, tetapi apa yang terjadi atau tidak menjadi selepas itulah pendorong akhir yang tampaknya menerjah Dato' Nasarudin berhijrah. Kian goyah parti manakala sokongan terhadap kerajaan juga terus merosot. Tidak kelihatan sebarang usaha mereformasi parti waima para pemimpin, yakni yang lesu dan yang menyumbang kepada masalah parti, terus mengitar semula gagasan dan rumusan yang sudah lapuk.

Nampaknya, bukan saja air pasang sampai paras pinggang pada bulan Mac lalu dibiarkan saja malahan hampir setahun selepas itu ia bagi direlakan terus naik. Tentu saja para ahli kita di semua peringkat semakin luntur keyakinan mereka terhadap masa depan parti. Amat tidak wajarlah para pemimpin kita berdrama bangsawan kononnya tak rugi kehilangan Nasarudin, malah tujuan beliau diperkotak-katikkan. Itu sama teruknya dengan memperkecilkan ketidakmampuan kita kini untuk memenangi PRK dan sama seperti bidalan fasal orang yang karam sebab mengabaikan ombak yang kecil

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Saya akan terus menegaskan bahawa keyakinan tulen semata-mata harapan yang berlandaskan tanggapan mengenai kebenaran. Kita perlu bersikap terbuka tentang segala masalah kita agar dapat kita menangani kesemuanya secara langsung. Memang menyakitkan, namun proses ini perlu, dan demi kejayaannya, ia mesti ditunjangi para pemimpin telus, yang kewenangan serta kewibawaan mereka bukannya bertopang atas wang ringgit.