

Achieving Malaysia's Potential

Written by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah

Tuesday, 14 July 2015 22:18 - Last Updated Tuesday, 14 July 2015 22:24

Today, 14 July 2015, marks the 40th day of the passing of my dear wife. As I overcome the sadness of her absence, I feel freer to reflect upon and address the goings on in Malaysia during the last several months.

2. We are being constantly bombarded with an overdose of news about the sorry state of our national finance. Controversies abound and purported mega financial scandals are being discussed and gossiped over social media. Gripes about this situation are making the round. Not least is the dire strait that our sovereign fund, 1MDB, finds itself in.

3. However, the reality is that all these remain mere talk and nothing has changed. In effect, currently there is much confusion in the people's minds which have to process statements whose veracity is suspect and might not reflect the true situation.

4. We earnestly hope that there is still honour left in our beloved country and that there are honourable men who have the relevant facts to put the matter to rest. They should stand fast by their principles and take the moral high ground to assist in the resolution of the problem. If this were the case, surely there is no necessity for us to waste time instituting inquiries and investigations. Knowing the facts and the problem but not telling the truth is not an option.

5. Such an action would enable the country to restore our battered and damaged image and dignity within the world community. This is essential in our effort to rebuild the confidence that was painstakingly developed by our founding fathers.

6. Most importantly, we must stay focused on the more immediate concern facing our people; that is, the economic and financial difficulties due to the shrinking Ringgit and the indifferent take-home salaries and wages made worse by the spiraling cost of such essentials as motor fuel and burdensome impositions such as the GST. Given the crisis we are facing, it would not be unreasonable to defer the GST as it has a negative impact on ordinary people. To mitigate the loss of revenue, it could be replaced by some other taxation. We must alleviate the hardship of the people in their trying to make ends meet. We must address how the ever increasing living cost can be mitigated and overcome.

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7. It is undeniable that life is a constant struggle for the many. They worry about the future of their children and grandchildren. They fret about the continuously deteriorating quality of life. Indeed they deserve better. A particular socio-economic issue creating much worry among the people is the lack of a financial safety net to provide economic security for retirees.

8. Worries about unemployable graduates must necessarily lead us to the type of education that we are giving to our children. This does not quite prepare them for employment. What should we do? Perhaps the country could adopt a national education policy that can withstand the test of time.

9. We must therefore stop bickering, squabbling and politicking. We must close rank and come together to achieve the rich potential that has always been our feature. We should consider a total overhaul of the system.

On that note, I wish every Malaysian "Selamat Hari Raya Aidil Fitri" and a happy holiday ahead.

Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah

Member of Parliament Gua Musang

Kuala Lumpur,

14th July 2015,

27th Ramadhan 1436H.

MEMENUHI KEUPAYAAN MALAYSIA

Hari ini, 14 Julai 2015 genaplah 40 hari isteri saya pulang ke Rahmatullah. Dalam mengatasi kesedihan ini saya berkesempatan untuk mengimbas kembali apa yang sedang dialami oleh Malaysia pada akhir-akhir ini.

2. Kini kita sedang dibanjiri berita buruk mengenai keadaan tenat kewangan negara. Berbagai kontroversi serta kononnya skandal kewangan besar-besaran yang menjadi buah mulut hangat diperkatakan di media sosial. Rungutan mengenai keadaan buruk ini kedengaran di sana-sini. Kedudukan tersepit syarikat pelaburan negara, 1MDB, tidak kurang diperkatakan.

3. Bagaimanapun apa yang nyata ialah semuanya ini cuma omong kosong yang tidak membawa apa-apa faedah. Hakikatnya rakyat kini terkeliru kerana terdapat terlalu banyak kenyataan yang tidak dapat dipastikan kesahihannya dan tidak mencerminkan keadaan sebenar.

4. Kita menaruh penuh harapan agar masih ada lagi maruah di negara tercinta ini. Juga diharapkan akan tampil budiman bermaruah yang mampu memberi keterangan berasaskan fakta berkaitan yang ada pada mereka demi mententeramkan keadaan. Mereka hendaklah berpegang teguh kepada prinsip, tanpa berganjak daripada pegangan moral dalam usaha membantu mengatasi masalah tersebut. Sekiranya inilah keadaannya, sudah tentu kita tidak perlu mengadakan soal siasat dan penyiasatan. Jikalau masalah serta fakta berkaitan diketahui, kenapa tidak berterus terang?

5. Tindakan sebegini akan membolehkan negara membaiki dan memulih imej serta maruah kita yang remuk-redam di mata dunia. Kita perlu melaksanakan perkara ini dalam usaha mengembalikan keyakinan yang dibina dengan begitu cermat oleh pengasas negara kita.

6. Paling penting sekali ialah kita semestinya memberi perhatian penuh kepada kegundahan rakyat jelata yang terjebak dengan kegawatan ekonomi dan kewangan akibat kejatuhan nilai Ringgit serta gaji dan upahan bersih yang tidak seberapa. Dan kita perlu sedar bahawa keadaan ini diburukkan lagi oleh kenaikan harga barangan keperluan asas seperti minyak petrol dan bebanan Cukai Barangan dan Perkhidmatan (GST). Memandangkan kita tenat dilanda krisis, amatlah munasabah GST ditanggihkan, oleh kerana kesan negatifnya ke atas rakyat jelata. Demi meringankan kesan kekurangan pendapatan akibat penangguhan ini kita bolehlah memperkenalkan percukaian lain yang tidak membebankan rakyat. Kita perlu mengatasi kesusahan rakyat jelata dalam usaha mereka menyambung hidup seharian di samping mencari penyelesaian terhadap kos sara hidup yang kian melambung.

7. Tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa sebahagian besar rakyat terpaksa bergelut setiap hari untuk terus hidup. Mereka risau akan masa depan anak cucu mereka. Mereka gelisah tentang mutu kehidupan yang semakin merosot. Sesungguhnya mereka berhak menikmati kehidupan yang lebih baik. Salah satu masalah sosio-ekonomi yang merunsingkan rakyat ialah tiadanya jaringan keselamatan kewangan untuk menjamin keselesaan ekonomi para pesara.

8. Kerisauan tentang graduan yang tidak dapat diambil bekerja pasti menghalakan pandangan kita kepada pendidikan yang diberikan kepada generasi muda kita. Nyata sekali pendidikan ini gagal menyediakan mereka untuk pekerjaan. Apakah yang harus kita lakukan? Mungkin kita perlu dasar pendidikan kebangsaan yang tahan diuji zaman.

9. Maka itu kita hendaklah berhenti daripada berbalah, bertengkar dan bermain politik. Kita perlu rapatkan saf dan berkerjasama untuk memenuhi keupayaan serta potensi kita. Kita juga harus menimbang pembaikan pulih menyeluruh akan sistem ini.

Dengan ini saya ucapkan selamat menyambut Hari Raya Aidil Fitri dan selamat bercuti kepada semua.

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