

The Problem is not the Elections. The Problem is Democracy itself!

News:

Recently, speculation that the Malaysian General Election will be held in March 2017 has created a frantic call for every citizen of full age to register as voters. The call was initiated by opposition political parties and their justification is only one - to overthrow the existing government by way of elections and democracy. The question of who is going to win or what will happen and what to do after the win is secondary. The most important thing for them is the defeat of the current ruling government. One of the issues stressed in the campaign is the discrepancy in political awareness between the Malays and the Chinese in fulfilling their democratic rights. This is because, in general, the percentage of registered voters and voter turnouts among the Chinese continues to increase, while that of the Malays are decreasing in many areas. The lackadaisical attitude of the Malays in this issue is lamented upon and consequently, racial arguments are justified in order to raise the political awareness of the Malays.

Comment:

Various reasons are used by the ruling party and the oppositions, including various bodies and individuals, to encourage and urge everyone to register as voters and to vote. Voting is often pictured as the right and duty of every citizen who has come of age. And more often than not, we are urged to vote for the sake of religion, race and country. The ruling party spoke about the duty to vote for the sake of development, stability, prosperity and all sorts of advantages that supposedly, can only be provided by them. Promises are sweet indeed. But reality bears witness that until today, people continue to feel pressed and live a disadvantaged life. The oppositions on the other hand, urge people to register as voters using the 'rights of democracy' as their main argument. Hence, we often hear of efforts to recover or restore democracy, to make the voice of the people a sacred voice, to restore freedom of expression, independence of the judiciary, freedom of media and the likes. To the opposition, the people must use this 'democratic right' to defeat the iron-fisted government. At the same time, Islamic sentiments are also being played in urging people to vote. Words such as "if we do not vote, then we are giving a walkover to the infidels / secular people", "we have no other way to enforce Islam except through democracy and elections" and the likes. There are even fatwas issued that it is haram if one does not vote for candidates who wish to uphold Islam. Even more surprising, there is a fatwa that says that voting is akin to jihad and those who do not vote have rejected jihad. In addition to efforts like this, it is also a known secret that a 'small gift' have indeed managed to tame many voters all these years.

Muslims should not be preoccupied with these issues in coming up with a decision whether we should or should not vote. We cannot deny that many who don't vote do so due to their political awareness. This awareness comes from their experience and observation of the reality of the repeating elections they faced over the years. Voters, who desire change, realize that change is but a dream. They realize that leaders may change, but the situation remains the same. If the voter is a Muslim who wishes to see Islam implemented, s/he is repeatedly disheartened. It is undeniable that Muslims in Malaysia want to see Islam implemented and wishes to see the success of Islamic parties. However, when people begin to see that on one hand the Islamic parties campaign for Islam, but on the other, the reality of

Islam they are campaigning for does not exist in the body of the parties, the disappointment of Muslims can no longer be contained and these parties not only lose support, but also lose their credibility in the eyes of the people.

The main mistake of the Islamic parties that chose to work within the framework of democracy is that they believe that democracy is the best available system today and is the only peaceful way to practice political Islam. Although they admit that they do not believe in democracy, they kept saying that democracy is only a means to an end. Oddly, they knew very well that they will never win the elections! How could they win if the number of their candidates never reached even half of the parliamentary seats? Indeed for those who are already aware, they have begun to see how unrealistic the democratic struggle is to uphold Islam, and began to move towards finding a struggle outside the box of democracy.

As Muslims, we should understand that Islam permits elections or voting, as long as they are carried out in accordance with Islamic law. In the context of democracy, elections serve to elect representatives to the Parliament, who will carry out two main functions namely to enact laws and to perform check and balance on governance. Check and balance on governance to ensure prosperity and healthy development is allowed in Islam as long as legal issues (law making) are not discussed. However, enacting and legislating laws are contrary to Islam because through this function, men have taken the rights of Allah in making laws. And this is the most important function of the parliament! On that basis, any candidate to the parliament or any voter who votes for the candidate is carrying out a haram act.

Indeed, the main problem is not the problem of voting. The suffering experienced by Muslims is not the result of voters not registering to vote. It is a huge mistake when Islamic political parties are so focused on the elections and struggle to get votes. It is certainly an even bigger mistake when the struggle is a struggle to 'occupy' Putrajaya. The main problem faced by Muslims is that the Sharia law is not implemented fully in our lives today, neither as individuals nor as a State. Most Muslim countries implement the democratic-capitalist system which is a system of Kufr. This is the real cause of the suffering of Muslims. This is a system full of falsehood and must be replaced by the Islamic system and it is very important to understand that in order to replace this system of disbelief, the struggle cannot be exerted within the framework of the system. Besides being haram, Muslims will never achieve success through democracy. Muslims will never be triumphant in a game where the rules and regulations are determined by the enemy. Muslims will only be victorious when the struggle to implement Islam is 'played' outside the enemy field, within the rules and regulations set by Allah (swt).

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