

# Urgency for reforms greater than ever

[The Malaysian Insight](#)

THE Institutional Reforms Committee has its work cut out as the imperative for effective change get louder by the day. The heavy burden of the people's aspirations for a new dawn in Malaysia rests squarely upon their shoulders. They have to provide the platform for transcendental change of the system as a whole rather than being dependent on the providence and goodwill of individuals. It has to become supreme so rulers may come and go but the system remains.



We are now coming to grips with more public disclosures of gross financial mismanagement within our ministries coupled with injustices caused by the non-adherence to the rule of law. It comes as no surprise and we can expect more of such news as the clean-up gathers momentum. It will probably get worse before becoming better!

The extent and the damage suffered is slowly being revealed as we brace for the impact of the socio-economic costs for the years of complicity. Hopefully, the approach of "cash is king" will be a thing of the past as we forge ahead towards a system that complies fully with accountability and responsibility in the strictest interpretation available.

Society, though, has to bear the major part of the blame for allowing the abuse to go this far unchecked. In reality, a whole generation grew up with the stench of corruption and abuse of power and became accustomed to it. The political masters with great impunity took advantage of it blatantly and allowed the deterioration of accountability and responsibility. The concept of good governance virtually evaporated

and hints of bankruptcy have been in the grapevine for some time now.

All the branches of our parliamentary system are under pressure as the IRC studies how to strengthen it. They have to widen the concept of our present separation of powers between the executive and the legislative. The further apart they are, the less an individual can become powerful enough to control it. We have had enough of too much fusion of powers in our parliamentary system, which has affected the criminal justice system, almost rendering it incompetent.

The judiciary has to be made more independent in its role to provide effective checks and balances in our parliamentary system, which will automatically supplement them in our criminal justice system. The appointments of the bench have to take on a new dimension of moral competency in tandem with the contemporary aspirations of "Malaysia Baru".

It is heartening to note that the mainstream media has embarked on efforts to educate the general public on how our political system works. Opinions from our vibrant politicians and legal eagles have been sought. Although, it is obvious that many have their own interpretations and understanding of the theories of political science and the rule of law. However, the constant discussions augur well towards the formation of a more well-informed and mature society. Expectations will grow and pressures to deliver the goods will move in tandem.

It is no easy task for our institutional reforms committee as we pin our hopes and dreams on them to have their fingers on the pulse of the problem. Through them, we have the best opportunity now to make our system more accountable than ever before. It must result in no one individual being too powerful, be it either in the branches of our parliamentary system or in the limbs of the criminal justice system. The IRC is that beacon of hope.

With the ongoing political cleansing, not only should heads roll by having

people simply vacate their posts but they should also be prosecuted for dereliction of duty and criminal accountability. The reasons of being cowed and intimidated by those in the corridors of power will never be tolerated and accepted again. Courage to carry out the responsibilities of the office without fear or favour must become the norm and not the exception, regardless of who the personality is. Transparency becomes the mutual factor in all the aforesaid branches and limbs of our system.

We are in for a rough ride in the days and months to come. It will be tough but if we are willing to call a spade a spade, we will definitely be up there amongst the best sooner than expected. – June 14, 2018.

*\* G. Selva reads The Malaysian Insight.*