Disciplined society: Towards a developed nation

The government has come up with various policies and programmes for Malaysia to achieve the aim of becoming a high income nation. However, all this effort will come to naught if we fail to implement them. Implementation has always been a stumbling block for us and this is true of both the public and private sector. I believe the problem of implementation is due to lack of discipline among our people; without discipline it will be difficult to see a project through to completion.

The issue of discipline is one we have taken lightly for far too long. As children, we were taught how to behave. However, as we get older, a lot of things are allowed to slip. We are now responsible adults and it is time we learned the lessons of proper conduct.

Before Hari Raya this year, I went to the Seri Setia area in Petaling Jaya with my son. It was very congested and as we were leaving, the car beside us wanted to move as well. My son waved his hand to indicate to the other car to move first. Imagine our shock when an old man in the other car showed us his fist in response. I then also waved my hand to urge the other car to go ahead but then the old man got down and started kicking our tyres. I still don’t understand what the problem was!

This kind of unruly behaviour has become quite rampant and we need to do something about it. I think more traffic police should be on site to discipline drivers and enforce the law. People may argue that charging RM10 an hour for parking is ridiculous but money is not the issue. Strict rules and guidelines are necessary to get people to think and behave responsibly.

Many years ago, when I was in a foreign country, I was fined almost RM100 for not parking my car properly, that is not parking my car within the parking box. One of my car tyres had touched the yellow line. I was later told that the offence may have seemed trivial but the fine was necessary to discipline people, so that others will not be troubled by our actions.

A society that is disciplined is not just about infrastructure and facilities, it is also about character, mindset and the way we behave. In order for Malaysia to become a developed nation, its citizens must have core fundamental values such as discipline, courtesy, and integrity. A society that is disciplined is made up of people who are committed to their responsibilities and dedicated to fulfilling their obligations. And this will ensure that our policies and programmes for nation building are implemented well. Additionally, a developed nation is one in which its citizens behave with integrity and conduct themselves in a respectable manner by demonstrating courtesy and consideration towards others. As we make the journey to a high income nation, the biggest challenge will be to ensure that the attitude, mentality and character of our people befit a developed society.

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