

Important lessons from the election of a neighboring country, Malaysia

The news of the election of a neighboring country, Malaysia interests a lot of Thais.

Some media take it to analyze the election in Thailand. If 92-year-old Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad can come back to be the Prime Minister of Malaysia, 80-year-old Chuan Leekpai will be able to become the leader of the Democrat Party again.

The election result of Malaysia reflects that the old generation political leaders like Mr. Sanoh Thienthong or ex-Prime Minister Gen. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh are still meaningful. It can be implied that the young generation should cooperate with the old generation in politics so that the country can move on. Moreover, the young generation's political party is a hot issue.

I try to summarize the lesson from Malaysia's this election as follows.

First, Najib Razak's government suffered serious loss. They got only 79 seats decreasing from 133 seats in 2013. The opposition party led by Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad won by 122 seats.

Second, this is the first defeat during the past 60 years of UMNO (The United Malays National Organisation) which has been continuously ruling Malaysia since becoming

independent. This is the war between the old UMNO people, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad who used to rule Malaysia as the Prime Minister for more than 20 years and built the leader like Najib Razak. It is the fight between the old UMNO and the current UMNO member who became the opposition.

Third, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad knows that UMNO is very strong. If he wants to beat UMNO, he will have to cooperate with Anwar Ibrahim's opposition party who has enough popularity. In the past, he used to be the deputy minister during Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad's era.

Fourth, when Anwar Ibrahim was the deputy minister, he wanted to hurriedly be the Malaysia leader. Therefore, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad was dissatisfied and filed a complaint against him for homosexual case.

Fifth, in this fight, the first point is that politics has no permanent friends and enemies.

Sixth, besides Anwar Ibrahim's party, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad cooperates with other political parties from the Chinese and Indian groups. In the past, UMNO had policy to encourage the Chinese and Indian to focus on trade and discriminated them from politics.

Seventh, the Malaysian lacked trust in the leader like Najib Razak due to corruption. He was accused of transferring the about 700-million USD money from IMDB fund to his personal account. He could not clarify about this so people could no longer trust him.

Eight, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad has filed the forgiving request for Anwar Ibrahim to get out of the prison. He will be the next Prime Minister after Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad's 2-year service.

Ninth, this lesson reflects that Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad has dedication to his country. Despite his old age, he cares for his country survival. His leadership is worth learning for those who are interested in the leaders' roles in this region.

Tenth, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad ran the strategies to win the election but finally reconciled with his old subordinate who he used to file the lawsuit for homosexual case.

Eleventh, lesson learnt from Anwar Ibrahim is that he grew fast and had ambition. Therefore, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad was dissatisfied with him. Anwar Ibrahim got 17-year punishment. He learnt from pain. The leaders who can win must learn from pain as shown on my 3L's Theory.

1. Learning from pain
2. Learning from experiences
3. Learning from listening

Twelfth, on this occasion, it is interesting that how Gen. Prayut Chan-ocha's government run the policy on 3 southern-bordered provinces.

He should take this opportunity to negotiate with the new Malaysian leader.

I had an opportunity to meet Anwar Ibrahim in Thailand and discuss with him. He knew and understood Thailand well. Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad understood 3 southern-bordered provinces problem well. These should be good signals for negotiation.

Finally, IMT-GT cooperation project among 3 countries: Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia have been continuously running and should speed up to reach success.



Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad (right) shook hand with Anwar Ibrahim at the palace in Kuala Lumpur on May 16, 2018.
Photo Credit: Malaysia's Ministry of Communications and Multimedia/ AFP



Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad during the election campaign



Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad used to be in the same party as Najib Razak.

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