



The Defeat of the Islamic Party Behind the Victory

Malaysia: The Negeri Sembilan state elections have drawn to a close with several surprises. It appears that the wave which struck Johor has also swept across Negeri Sembilan, much to the delight of the architects of the "Malay-Muslim" formula and their followers. The Perikatan Nasional-Barisan Nasional (PN-BN) coalition seems to have succeeded, and consequently, some have already begun to boast and express confidence in conquering Putrajaya in the upcoming 16th General Election.

As Muslims, beyond the success of the "Malay-Muslim" narrative and sentiments played by the PN-BN coalition, there is a fundamental question that must be answered: upon what foundation is this coalition built, and where is its trajectory heading? Is it founded upon Islamic principles and directed towards the implementation of Islam?

Is there, within any agreement, understanding, manifesto, or announcement from the coalition, a commitment to uphold the laws of Allah (swt) and dismantle the existing secular system? Or is it merely concerning seat allocations, constituency divisions, the distribution of positions, compromises on candidate names, and strategies to defeat political opponents? Which party dominates the coalition and dictates its direction – the secular party or the Islamic party?

Although this is not the first time a coalition or cooperation between Islamic and secular parties has been formed during an election, all these questions are highly pertinent and must be asked. We are not directing these questions specifically at any particular Islamic or secular party, but rather at the entire Muslim Ummah who wishes to see Islam upheld as sovereign.

In many democratic countries worldwide, we often witness cooperation between Islamic parties and secular parties, or even with non-Muslim parties, for a singular purpose: to win elections. Islamic and secular parties, despite being traditional political adversaries, can unite and reconcile when they need one another in the pursuit of power. This is the nature and reality of democratic politics, which is fraught with vested interests. There are no eternal allies or eternal enemies; there are only eternal interests.

In Malaysia, racial and religious sentiments are frequently exploited to garner votes. When both sentiments are combined, they clearly yield lucrative results as in Johor and Negeri Sembilan. The coalition parties that capitalized on them emerged victorious. At first glance, this victory is indeed sweet to hear, as it is hailed as a Malay-Muslim victory. Yet, concealed behind this sweetness lies a profound question and a source of confusion: what exactly constitutes a "victory" for an Islamic party?

For a secular party, victory is easily defined: securing the majority of votes and successfully forming a government. However, for an Islamic party, if it adopts the exact same definition, it is fundamentally indistinguishable from a secular party. The meaning of "victory" for an Islamic party should be distinct, and this is inherently understood by Islamic parties themselves. Unfortunately, they often attempt to shift this definition to prove to their members and supporters that they have won.

Winning Seats Does Not Equate to an Islamic Victory

Acknowledged or not, the reality is that the Islamic party did not win in this election; in fact, it has never won in any election in the true sense of the word. Yes, they may win in terms of numbers or the tally of seats, but those numbers and seats do not in any way represent the victory of the ad-Deen (the religion).

The victory of an Islamic party is never measured by the number of seats, a list of positions, or a live-broadcast swearing-in ceremony. It truly wins when it fights for Islam – educating the Ummah with Aqeedah and Shariah, exposing the corruption of the secular system and striving to dismantle it, mobilizing the Ummah to uphold the laws of the Quran and the Sunnah, holding the secular government accountable to implement the laws of Allah comprehensively (Kaffah), and striving to establish an Islamic State (Khilafah).

If an Islamic party accomplishes all of this, then it has truly won, even if the laws of Allah (swt) have not yet been implemented and the Khilafah has not yet been established, because it has fulfilled its obligations as commanded by Allah (swt). The function and role of an Islamic party are not to hunt for votes, nor to hunt for seats, but to seek the pleasure of the Almighty.

An Islamic party has genuinely lost when the goal of its struggle shifts from upholding Islam to merely winning elections. It is even more tragic when it frequently deceives or confuses its members and supporters by claiming that electoral victory is the path to implementing Islam – an objective that has never been successfully realized. We often hear members and supporters of Islamic parties being asked to patiently wait for the "right time" for Islam to come to power – a time that has never arrived despite decades of struggling within the democratic framework.

What happens is precisely the opposite. Look at who truly benefits in every election where a secular party is supported by an Islamic party. It is invariably the secular party that returns with the lion's share of the rewards. It is the secular party that subsequently gains power, secures the most positions, and acquires far broader status and influence. It is the secular party that governs and dictates policies, drives the usury-based economy, and safeguards every pillar of the system inherited from the colonizers. In short, the Islamic party returns home with seats, while the secular party returns home with the state. Is this what the Islamic party calls a victory?

Recognizing Falsehood, Then Aiding It

Consciously or not, when an Islamic party merges or cooperates with a secular party, it has effectively recognized the legitimacy of the secular party along with their struggle, which perpetually separates religion from life. The party that should be the primary target of accountability and critique transforms into a comrade-in-arms. The party that is already known to have no intention of implementing Islam is elevated to become a "Bitanah" (confidant or close ally), a partner for negotiation, a keeper of shared secrets, and a stakeholder in power. It even transforms into a purified and respected entity – all for the sake of votes and authority.

How could an Islamic party be content with a secular party, to the extent of joining their campaigns, sacrificing energy, time, and finances, and surrendering its own votes while rallying the Ummah's votes to ensure the secular party's victory? It is deeply unfortunate when the Islamic party fails to realize (and even more unfortunate if they do realize) that their actions do not constitute wisdom (Hikmah), do not align with Islamic politics, and represent mutual assistance in sin and transgression. Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا

"And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty." [Al-Ma'idah (5): 2].

Some might ask, what is wrong with uniting the Malays and Muslims? Is this not a noble endeavour demanded by the religion? The answer is yes; it is not wrong to unite the Malays and Muslims, but they must be united upon the foundation of Islam, not upon the foundation of Malay nationalism. Furthermore, this unification must be built upon Aqeedah to uphold the

laws of the Quran and the Sunnah, not upon the pragmatic benefits of winning elections to defend the laws of Lord Reid.

The Dangers of Nifaq, Power-Sharing, and Prolonging the Life of Secularism

Through the amalgamation of Islamic and secular parties, a dangerous disease threatens to seep into the members of the Islamic party is Nifaq (hypocrisy). It is highly probable that many members of the Islamic party genuinely reject, dislike, or are uncomfortable with secularism or secular politicians, and their hearts are perfectly sincere in harbouring these feelings. However, to maintain the integrity of the coalition, their tongues are forced to offer praise, their faces are forced into sweet smiles, and their hands are forced to shake warmly. This creates a stark contradiction between what is hidden in the heart and what is outwardly displayed on the stage.

The trait of Nifaq is exceptionally dangerous for a Muslim. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «إِنَّ مِنْ شَرِّ النَّاسِ ذَا الْوَجْهَيْنِ الَّذِي يَأْتِي هَؤُلَاءِ بِوَجْهِهِ وَهَؤُلَاءِ بِوَجْهِهِ» **"The worst of people is the two-faced person who comes to these people with one face and to those people with another face."** [Narrated by al-Bukhari & Muslim].

The most detrimental consequence of the coalition or cooperation between Islamic party and secular party is when the Islamic party sits alongside the secular party in ruling/government, thereby implementing and defending a system and laws that do not originate from Allah (swt). The Islamic party no longer merely remains silent in the face of vice; it has become an active executor and reinforcer of the secular system itself, whereas Allah (swt) strictly commands: وَأَنْ احْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ **"And judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations and beware of them, lest they tempt you away from a portion of that which Allah has revealed to you."** [Al-Ma'idah (5): 49].

When participating in a ruling alongside a secular party, and colluding within an administration anchored in secularism, the Islamic party has essentially been successfully led astray by the secular party. Consequently, the Islamic party has prolonged the lifespan of the secular party and the secular system itself – a system that should rightfully be uprooted, burned to the ground, and replaced entirely with the Islamic system.

Conclusion

Although the Islamic party may have won several seats as a result of its coalition with the secular party, it has in truth lost. In fact, it lost from the very beginning because it retreated from the true battlefield of the struggle. The much-proclaimed victory is merely a triumph on the scoreboard, not a victory on the scales of Allah (swt).

As Muslims, we must all remember that without Islam, no matter how many seats are won, they are merely numbers; no matter how many positions are held, they are merely burdens. The victory of winning seats holds no value in the sight of Allah (swt), and earthly positions will become a source of profound regret in the Hereafter. This Ummah does not need seats within a wrecked system; rather, it needs the Islamic system to replace the wrecked one – a system that can only be realized under the State of al-Khilafah ar-Rashidah ala Minhaj an-Nubuwwah (the Rightly-Guided Caliphate upon the Method of Prophethood).

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Abdul Hakim Othman

Official Spokesperson of Hizb ut Tahrir in Malaysia