

BN's fatal screw-up
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Gleefully following the victories of the people against one government after another in North Africa and the Middle East, I keep recalling that these revolutions were ultimately triggered by the death of just one young man, Mohamed Bouazizi, in Tunisia.

That proved the tipping point, the final straw that raised popular resentment against decades of corruption, repression and injustice to what nuclear scientists call 'critical mass', resulting in the chain reaction that's already blown several regimes away and still threatens a great many others.

So, as a long-time loather of Malaysia's Barisan Nasional regime, I've been closely watching to see if it would succumb to the fall-out of the Arab revolt, or survive to later implode of its own accord.

malaysia and nuclear reactor and technologyBut now I suspect that the seeds of BN's destruction have been sown, not by explosive events in the Arab world, but by the ongoing nuclear emergency in earthquake- and tsunami-devastated northern Japan.

The Malaysian government's astonishing arrogance in insisting that it would proceed with plans to build nuclear power stations despite the waves of fear unleashed on the Japanese people by damage to four of its reactors could well, I believe, prove its long-deserved downfall.

Of all the countless crimes and screw-ups the BN regime has committed, surely this one shows the most callous disregard for the well-being of Malaysian citizens.

And could well finally unite Malaysians in a way that no fake "1Malaysia" slogan ever could, in the realisation that all that drives BN is its greed for graft-riddled mega-projects at the expense of Malaysian people of all races and creeds.

Of course this God-forsaken government does its damndest, under cover of the "1Malaysia" mantra, to demonstrate that it is Muslim- and Malay-friendly. Its tolerance of the so-called "cow's-head" outrage against Hindu Malaysians a couple of years ago, later fire-bombings of Christian places of worship, and the recent banning and subsequent desecration of a shipment of Bahasa-language bibles have all, no doubt, been engineered to dramatise its 'defence' of Islam.

But it also routinely outrages the values of Islam and any other religion I know of with crimes against the people at large.

No sure recourse to the law

And the destruction of the independence and integrity of Malaysia's judiciary, starting with Mahathir's sacking of the Lord President back in 1988, has left Malaysian citizens with no sure recourse to the law in defence of their rights and liberties, or in the face of government corruption and other forms of criminality.

This is starkly evident in legal, or rather highly illegal, fiascos like the Anwar Ibrahim

sodomy trials, the show-trial of selected suspects in the Altantuya Shaariibuu murder case, and so-called 'royal commissions' into the police force, the fixing of judicial appointments and the death of the unfortunate Teoh Beng Hock following questioning at MACC headquarters.

Citizens also have no chance of redress or prospect of justice when they're victimised by the police, as in countless suspicious fatal 'shoot-outs' and beatings and deaths in custody.

The law, so-called, clearly doesn't apply to BN politicians and cronies, with a long list of high-level figures suspected of massive corruption, including Rafidah Aziz, S Samy Vellu and Abdul Taib Mahmud, not to mention former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, going uninvestigated, let alone prosecuted. And a long list of others half-heartedly tried and found innocent.

And most notoriously, in the Altantuya murder case, Najib Abdul Razak, though clearly at least peripherally implicated, was permitted to swear his innocence and indeed ignorance on the Quran rather than being called or even mentioned in court.

That the Malaysian populace hasn't been outraged to the point of revolt by decades of such illegality and criminality is testament to the BN regime's success in concealing and spinning the truth in its lying mainstream media.

But thanks to the power and pervasiveness of the same wireless, borderless communications technologies that have enabled revolutions in the Arab world, BN's attempts to cover-up its crimes are increasingly resulting in screw-ups.

The expensive hiring of Apco Worldwide, a PR and lobbying organisation that was quickly identified as being Israeli owned, was and remains an idiotic hypocrisy by a regime that has long underlined its Islamic credentials by refusing to recognise the existence of Israel.

And many of the BN regime's presumably Apco-inspired PR campaigns have blown-up in its face. The "1Malaysia. People first. Performance now" slogan, for example, which Najib Razak claims bears no relationship to earlier efforts elsewhere like "1Israel" and "1Singapore", is widely seen as a stupid, cynical joke.

Chorus of scorn and derision

Even more disconcerting for Apco and its BN clients must be the chorus of scorn and derision that has greeted concerted and very costly attempts to transform Najib's wife into a saintly First Lady of Malaysia figure.

Firstly she was alleged in an anonymously-paid advertisement in the New York Times to have received an international humanitarian award that apparently didn't previously exist, from an organisation nobody had heard of.

Next she was credited by the government and its prostituted media with an outstanding act of national motherhood in 'rescuing' Malaysian, or rather Malay, students from the unrest in Cairo.

Some of Malaysia's more naive citizens appeared to be taken in by this, so the regime and its PR people were emboldened to give the First Lady of Malaysia (FLOM) an official office in Putrajaya and a slot on the government website.

But this proved a step too far for a great many perceptive and outspoken Malaysians, and thus yet another screw-up that the mendacious Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Nazri Aziz, had to explain away.

Nothing daunted, however, by this failure on the FLOM front, now it appears that the BN/Apco gang has embarked on what could well prove its most spectacular screw-up so far: the revelation by a mysterious "Datuk T" of a video allegedly starring Anwar Ibrahim in a sex-romp with a Chinese prostitute.

Judging by the initial public reaction I've seen, this could well prove the final, fatal boo-boo that I've been waiting so long for BN to commit. But if not, and the Malaysian people decide they still haven't had enough of BN's obscene, criminal screw-ups, then there's always the nuclear power issue ticking away like a time-bomb, and threatening to achieve critical mass at any moment.

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