

Malaysia's own Comical Ali
Malaysiakini.com
June 22, 2011

For a criminal regime to survive and thrive, it has to look deadly serious. So you know it's in dire distress when it has to resort to sending in the clowns.

The most classic instance of this, as we all vividly recall, was Saddam Hussein's employment of the man dubbed 'Comical Ali' for the ludicrous lies he told about the 'victories' of the Butcher of Baghdad, even as defeat was plainly evident for the whole world to see on TV.

And now Umno/BN has wheeled-out its very own tragicomic Ibrahim Ali (left) of Perkasa, or more appropriately Pukasa, to hit its encroaching enemies with a series of riotous punch-lines.

So far his zany antics have included a call for a fatwa against an insanely imaginary Christian conspiracy to take over Malaysia as alleged by the poisonous Umno/BN tabloid Utusan Malaysia, and thinly-veiled threats of violence against the Chinese community.

"If the Bersih rally is not called off," he declared recently, "and if they go ahead with it - if they don't cancel it on July 8 or 9 - I believe the Chinese community, many of them, will have to stock up on food at home. Anything can happen on that day."

And besides thus heavily hinting at a repeat of the infamous anti-opposition riots of May 13, 1969, he's apparently determined to take his comedy show on the road to try and disrupt the Bersih 2.0 walk for free and fair elections in the event that it goes ahead, despite official efforts to prevent it.

Unlike his Iraqi precursor, however, Malaysia's Comical Ali is by no means a one-man show. He's just part of an entire circus that the corrupt and repressive Umno/BN regime has put together in a desperate attempt to have its last laugh on the Malaysian people.

It features ringmaster Najib Abdul Razak spouting his ridiculous '1Malaysia' spiel; Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz, Khairy Jamaluddin, Rais Yatim and the boys performing their tired old political tricks; Hishammuddin Hussein (right) cracking his whip to keep the police, MACC and EC all jumping through the hoops on Umno/BN's behalf; and Dr Mahathir Mohamad as busy as ever trying to run the entire show from behind the scenes.

Of course Mahathir is still as consummate a clown as ever in his own right, and also loves to import international comedy acts like Robert Mugabe for special guest appearances.

Two-faced slogan

In fact the entire Umno/BN circus has a decidedly international flavour, recalling not only the original Comical Ali routine, but also the antics of other doomed regimes that are currently making laughable attempts to save themselves from the wrath of the people they've been playing for suckers all these years.

Like Gaddafi and his troupe of fellow funsters in Libya, who are decrying accidental civilian deaths at the hands of Nato in a ludicrous attempt to divert attention from the fact that Nato is there to stop them murdering their own people.

And Bashar al-Assad, the chinless clown who clings to power in Syria by waging war on his populace, all the while comically claiming that the revolt against his rule is by "saboteurs", and that he intends a raft of reforms as soon as the trouble is over.

The Umno/BN media in Malaysia probably don't show the elaborately-staged performances that the Damascus regime keeps enacting for audiences of his cronies and sycophants.

But if you can manage to catch the telecasts of his endless speeches on BBC World or some other legitimate channel, you'll see what a simpering idiot al-Assad comes across as, and what a pack of risible rubbish he talks.

For example, even while his armed forces and security police have been torturing and killing his hapless, protesting citizens, he has been entertaining captive audiences of his supporters with stuff like "if you say 'God, Syria and Bashar', I, Bashar al-Assad, will remain dutiful and faithful to my people and will walk along with them to build Syria, which we love and feel proud of."

Of course Najib also makes statements just as laughable as this in support of his lying slogan '1Malaysia. People first. Performance now', while simultaneously employing people like Malaysia's own Comical Ali to do his dirty work.

And Comical Ali's current grubby job is to not only keep the races as divided as possible for Umno/BN's benefit, but also to divert public attention from the purpose of the proposed Bersih 2.0 rally - to reform of the regime's corrupt electoral system.

So, by way of helping foil this attempted diversion, here is a summary of the eight Bersih 2.0 demands:

- * A thorough review of the electoral roll
- * Reforms to the postal balloting process
- * Indelible marking of voters who have cast their ballots
- * A minimum 21-day campaigning period
- * Equitable access to media for all participating parties
- * Strengthen institutions which enforce election laws
- * Eradication of electoral bribery
- * Putting a stop to dirty politics

Of course there's no way the Election Commission (EC) will act on any of these, as it's this clownish organisation's role to keep Umno/BN in power for as long as possible. As EC chairperson Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof (right) has categorically stated, "Amendments to the law will not happen or their demands accepted by staging a street demonstration. No way."

In other words, just as it's Comical Ali's role to subvert the '1Malaysia' part of Najib's two-faced slogan, the electoral commission is there to help ensure the falsehood in practice of its 'People first' and 'Performance now' components.

Meanwhile, Hishammuddin - who is Najib's cousin and Umno/BN's laughable apology for a guardian of law and order - is getting ready to roll out his Goon Show of Krazy Kops to stop protests against electoral fraud.

Or against anything else, for that matter, as Umno/BN is rightly terrified that peaceful protests could turn into the same kind of people power that has already toppled Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali and Mubarak, and continues to threaten their comical allies in Libya, Syria, Yemen, Morocco, Bahrain and beyond.

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