

Something is rotten in the state of Malaysia
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The line "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark", expressed by Marcellus to Hamlet in one of Shakespeare's greatest plays, was in response to the former's disgust at the moral decay and political corruption in the kingdom.

In Malaysia, even as the foul stench of the National Feedlot Company's (NFC) financial shenanigans permeates throughout the country, our leaders fail to smell anything fishy, leading to the question, "Do our leaders have an ounce of ethics left?"

This NFC fiasco has all the ingredients of cronyism, nepotism, corruption, incompetence and fraud.

Yet there is no Marcellus in our government who thought it stank. Could this be because these are the normal practices in our government's ministries?

That it is okay to award a RM250 million cattle project to a company with no experience whatsoever, in which the Auditor-General slammed as "in a mess", whose owners happens to be the family members of a federal minister, and in which the board diverted national funds to purchase luxury condominiums, against the mandate in which it was given?

To these damning revelations, our Government says, "What's the problem? These are hardworking people! Stop complaining and smell the roses!"

As we ordinary Malaysians struggle to maintain our real incomes and spending power in the face of rising prices, we look at despair at the cavalier tidak-apa response by the Government when hundreds of millions of our money are being misused, squandered and wasted.

The average Malaysian taxpayer can expect swift, punitive and legal consequences when he under-pays.

Yet when millions of our hard-earned ringgit are so blatantly abused, we see a game of musical chairs as the institutions that are supposed to protect our tax money scurry from their responsibilities, as if they were afraid of offending the perpetrator.

To be sure, we do not begrudge those who made their wealth through hard work, and those who took risks with their capital.

But this NFC episode surely takes the cake. Is it any wonder, that the average urban taxpayer has the perception that in Malaysia, business is rigged in favour of the political elite?

That one can attain great riches not because of competency or intellect, but because your wife happens to be a federal minister or that your father is a Umno or MCA bigwig?

Indeed, incompetency and failure by these cronies are bizarrely rewarded with bailouts.

And when the rakyat questions this, the standard modus operandi is: First deny that it is a failure - "mana ada masalah?" (the Auditor-General is mistaken because he does not know how to count cows); then

decry it as a (take your pick) sexist, racist or religious slander by the Opposition.

The way the BN politicians are behaving, it would seem they believe the adage that 'Malaysians easily forget' - in other words, don't comment, let the issue die by itself.

Well, we cannot allow them to take us as fools for even a minute longer.

Despite all this talk about transformation and transparency, it is business usual for these political masters and their cronies.

The lack of action by the government in response to this NFC saga aptly reveals that the government we have is nothing more than a private, cosy club that dishes out lucrative contracts and concessions to their family members, relatives and cronies.

It is time those politicians who plunders our treasury at will without fear of repercussions be held accountable.

Something sure stinks in the state of Malaysia, and Malaysians must stop putting up with it.

It is time to harness all our anger, despair, and sheer frustration, and send a loud message to these inept BN politicians that their time is over in the next general election.

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