

Shopping for the opposition
MalaysiaKini.com
January 26, 2012
Dean Johns

Apparently oblivious to Dr Mahathir Mohamad's caution to Umno/BN fat-cats late last year not to flash their ill-gotten wealth, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's wife, Rosmah Mansor, seems hell-bent on shopping till she drops.

Or more likely until the Umno/BN regime drops. Because her profligate alleged spending on designer fashions, diamond jewellery and a generally jet-setting lifestyle provides so much ammunition to the opposition as to make her a one-woman shoppoosition.

NONEAdmittedly she has denied all attempts to portray her as Malaysia's Imelda Marcos, including the story by Andrew Hornery of the Sydney Morning Herald that she recently holidayed with her husband in a RM60,000 per night hotel suite at Sydney's Darling Hotel and spent RM300,000 at a Paddington boutique.

"It's all rubbish, wildly exaggerated and not true," she reportedly told journalists from Malaysiakini and The Sun, adding that "I've come across this kind of allegations many times" and that "I'm always the victim".

Despite such protestations of innocence and pleadings for sympathy, however, public resentment and outrage appears to be rapidly transforming her dearly-desired and expensively-publicised role as 'First Lady of Malaysia' to that of 'First Lady of Anything But Umno'.

But as pre-eminent as she may be in her no doubt unintended but nonetheless powerful shoppoosition to her husband and the corrupt regime he currently heads, she's by no means alone.

Another prominent shoppoosition figure is Women, Family and Community Development Minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, whose husband and family have allegedly been on a massive self-enrichment and shopping spree, courtesy of the government-funded National Livestock Corporation.

But of course, when it comes to playing into the opposition's hands by spending public money for personal and political gain, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak himself puts other generators of shoppoosition like Shahrizat and Rosmah to shame.

An absolute art form

From the alleged squandering of the nation's funds on the notorious purchase of Scorpene submarines during his time as defence minister, to blatantly buying, or at least attempting to buy, a whole series of by-elections and handing out money hand-over-fist to civil servants and other vote-banks, he's raised the art of survival through spending to an absolute art form.

But, however, much support all this shopping with public money might have bought him, it has clearly excited as much if not more opposition.

NONEAnd even more costly to him and his regime has been his flip-flop position: his steady loss of support and inspiration of more and more opposition with his ceaseless two-faced attempts to portray himself as a moderate uniter of the nation as "1Malaysia" while employing Perkasa, Utusan Malaysia and other agents of rabid racism and religionism to ruthlessly divide and repressively rule the rakyat.

And let's not forget Najib's creation of what could justly be called a hoppoosition; all those opposition supporters and voters who will never forgive his illegal seizure of the government of the state of Perak by means of persuading or paying representatives to hop frog-like to the Umno/BN side, with the suspicious consent of a dubious judiciary.

As much hopposition, flip-flopposition and shoppoosition as Najib and his spouse and supporters have managed to generate through their greed, arrogance and double-dealing, however, what I predict will finally spell their political doom is good, old-fashioned copposition.

Under lawful governments in law-abiding societies, the police are generally seen as keepers of the civic peace and protectors of the lives and property of the citizens.

But in Malaysia the police and other so-called law-enforcement agencies are clearly so politicised, and so thus so complicit with their corrupt masters, as to be rightly seen as servants and security-guards of the regime.

Thus every crime the police commit or close an eye to generates more political opposition.

One injured and hospitalised

A classic example of the kind of copposition thus continuously generated is the chorus of scorn that has followed the denial by Selangor police chief Tun Hisan Tun Hamzah of any real problem when a gang invaded an ABU rally at Shah Alam City Council hall.

NONEDespite reports that the aggressors were wearing BN and Umno T-shirts and one victim had to be hospitalised, Hamzah told reporters that “nothing happened, the residents were unhappy, that’s all. No BN or Umno supporters disturbed them.”

This is a small but totally typical example of how politically partisan the police are in permitting public protests by regime-related groups like Perkasa and Umno Youth, and ensuring that opposition protesters like Bersih, as de-facto law minister Nazri Aziz recently put it, “face the music.”

And in the field of criminal law the situation is even more dire, with the police conspiring with the judiciary and regime politicians in ferociously prosecuting, indeed persecuting the likes of Anwar Ibrahim and Karpal Singh, while letting the killers of opposition witness Teoh Beng Hock and countless other so-called ‘suspects’ go free.

Nor are the forces of law and order terribly interested in tracing the sources of the massive incomes and assets of those who, like Rosmah, appear to have virtually limitless funds available for shopping.

In fact, as that ubiquitous regime mouthpiece, Nazri, claimed recently in response to calls for ministers and their family members to emulate opposition politicians in revealing their assets, such a move “may endanger them.”

Pressed as to what he meant by this curious remark, Nazri appeared at a loss to explain. But all of us critics of the Umno/BN regime and supporters of the opposition are well aware of the endangerment he had in mind.

That the millions of Malaysians who have finally had it up to here with the regime’s endless shopping, hopping, flip-flopping and bad-copping can hardly wait for their next chance to give it a well-deserved chopping.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/187509>