

Bersih 3.0: Umno's perfect game plan
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By Amran Ariffin

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, People will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the People from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its power to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension the truth is the greatest enemy of the State."

- Joseph Goebbels

Before 428

There was no news on Bersih 3.0 on national (read: BN owned) TV, radio and newspapers! Something amiss here! There was no banning of anything yellow from the men in blue! It can't be right! There was no restriction order for certain personalities from entering KL on 428. Something fishy here! And for Utusan Malaysia not demonizing Bersih 3.0, it was too good to be true!

Ultimately, the big mouthed son of Umno's founder declared Bersih 3.0 had no traction and was not a threat at all. When discussing these rather seemingly unlikely reactions from the establishment with like minded friends, they tended to believe that government had learnt the lesson from Bersih 2.0 and will allow Bersih 3.0 to proceed without disturbance as with Hijau 2.0 last month.

I did not buy this for one second because leopard does not change its' color overnight.

I strongly believed Umno had a sinister plan in place but I was more than happy to be proven wrong.

During 428

There was no police around! There were no early morning roadblocks leading to the city! There was no jamming of commuter and LRT lines.

There was no morning arrest as soon as you come up from LRT station looking remotely like PAS member. There was no shouting from men in blue to clear the station.

There was no SB loitering around pretending to be a "*tabligh*". There was no fear in the air; it was so surreal yet unreal! I didn't have that nervous anticipation that I normally experienced in all previous rallies. It was so easy and smooth.

People were not scared or people were made to believe that there was nothing to be scared of? What an amazingly calm Saturday morning or was it calm before the storm?

At Kelana Jaya LRT station, people, young and old were happily donning their official yellow Bersih 3.0 t-shirts. Others were wearing green Hijau 3.0 t-shirts. Some came with that hideous yellow and green permutation (sorry, going to rally doesn't mean you have to wear ugly shirts).

All in good spirit. Pretty girls were carrying yellow roses and sportingly posed for pictures with those requested (me included), sorry I digress here. Group photos were taken, Malay, Chinese, Indian and DLL (Dan Lain-Lain) all in one big group, this is the real 1Malaysia in action.

People were giving knowing look of "we are going there too". "Stay safe!" were ringing all around from strangers. This was Malaysia that I knew as a Kampong boy. It was an incredible pre-game party, but will someone crash our party?

At Masjid Jamek, more carnival atmosphere! I saw yellow Power Rangers, Batman, Angry Birds, Upin and Ipin joined the party. Heck even Telly Tubbies was there, off course the yellow one.

The chanting started early, "*Duduk Bantah*", "*Bersih! Bersih! Bersih Pilihanraya*", "*Bersih! Bersih! Bersih Malaysia*", "*Bersih, Bersih, Bersih SPR*", "*Bersih! Bersih! Bersih Polis*", "*Hidup, Hidup, Hidup Rakyat!*", "*Hancur, Hancur, Hancur Barisan!*"

The winner though got to be "*Undur! Undur! Undur Isteri Rosmah*" what a diabolical chant. The atmosphere was almost like watching a live football game with everyone supporting the same team.

Inching closer to the heavily cordoned Dataran Tak Merdeka, the chanting grew louder and reverberating throughout KL. "*Negaraku*" and "*Barisan Kita*" were sung non-stop. It was an incredible march, but will it rain on our parade?

At Dataran Tak Merdeka, crowd from all corners started to converge. Sea of yellow can be seen as far as Parliament House. It was body-to-body crowds and space was premium.

The air was thick and people were getting restless after few hours under blazing sun. I was taking my front row seat just across the barbed wires. The chanting turned more forceful into "*Buka! Buka! Buka Dataran*", "*Undur! Undur! Undur Polis*".

PAS' Unit Amal managed to control the restless crowd and even apprehended the troublemakers. The provocation started in earnest with police ramming their trucks and patrol cars through see of people for no apparent reason.

On the protester side, bottles were thrown and shout of "*Polis Bodoh!*" heard out of frustration. They were urged by the mean looking beefcakes to push forward.

These were the agent provocateurs in action. However there was no concerted effort from the crowd to storm the barricade even at the urging of some dumb politicians like Azmin Ali. The barbed wires were as thick as my thumbs; there was no way anybody can move beyond them without getting seriously hurt.

About 245pm, Husam Musa was telling anyone who cared to listen that the police had agreed to allow the protestors into Dataran by 5pm but the leaders were negotiating with the police to allow us in earlier. I began to relax but feeling of uneasiness lingered.

Right on cue 3pm, Anwar Ibrahim finished his speech, out of nowhere a group of professional guys with steel cutters and full protection heavy duty gloves started cutting the barbed wires.

Behind them, a group of mean looking "protesters" making a dash to the barrier and amazingly they were allowed in by the police manning the frontline. Unknown to the protesters that they were SBs, some of the naïve protestors were following their leads.

Frontline policemen started to withdraw in droves behind the Federal Riot Unit (FRU) instead of catching the perpetrators.

No warning, no siren, no bell, pop pop pop heard all over and KL skyline were covered in smoke. FRU and water cannon taking over front line.

They fired incessantly and directly into the crowd. There was no way they were trying to disperse the people. They were trying to hurt the people and teach them the lesson.

People had nowhere to run because it was sardine packed, some fainted on the spot. Going forward you were facing with FRU I their signature combat gear, going backward you need to run through cloud of tear gases.

There were a lot of shoving, screaming and crying because people were trying to escape the melee. Some of us ran all the way to Dang Wangi and in the process lost their shoes, BB and sprained their ankles.

My worse fear was unraveling in front of me, they planned this! They planned this and the victims were in the lair ready to be slaughtered. The blame will be squarely pinned on the opposition for not respecting the law.

I was lucky because I left the front row seat looking for a drinking water just before they started firing the gas. The FRU came charging towards people and beating the hell out anybody who was on their rampaging trail.

They were marching all the way to Petaling Street without even missing a beat on the tear gas. They weren't there for shopping! They charged the people all the way to KLCC and they weren't shopping there either! We were dressed for a costume party but they were going for war!

Witch hunting sessions started in earnest after that when rumors made their round that one of the policemen was killed in the line of duty. The policemen were moving like a pack of mad dogs baying for blood in exacting revenge for their fallen brothers.

They simply picked up people from the streets, isolated them and beat the crap out of that unlucky soul in a large group.

Some of the brave cameramen and journalists managed to get close the action, they too got whacked and their equipment smashed to the ground. Some of the policemen were seen challenging the crowd to fight with them.

It was now a free-for-all. Sections of the crowd started retaliating by throwing objects in the police's direction. That was what the evils in Putrajaya would like to see in tomorrow's newspaper and their political wet dreams came through!

In all this madness, the true caring spirit of Malaysians showed. Strangers were consoling each others, they were crying in each others' arms. Old Indian Achi was washing the face of young Chinese from tear gas.

A Malay boy was offering salt and water to the panic stricken protestors. A young Bangla even offered to share his mango juice with me. Some were carrying the injured comrades to safety.

I was overwhelmed with all these niceties all around me; it brought tears to my eyes. This was Malaysia that we longed for and why can't our government behave the same way?

After 428

Newspapers started to churn the stories that police had no choice but to take action to protect themselves. TV started showing group of protestors throwing things to the angelic police.

The most damaging of all, a *YouTube* video purportedly showing Anwar and Azmin instructing the crowd to breach the barricade making it's rounds.

The old broken record by the name Che Det started singing old tunes of opposition trying to topple democratically elected government.

Last but not least, Ah Jib Gor came out of his hiding place and praising the professionalism of the police. Now the *wayang* is completed with Tok Dalang slowly showing their hands.

All these got a very familiar feeling to it. That was what they planned all the while, lull the protesters into believing that police will not act against them. Herd the protesters into the slaughterhouse and when the time comes cut their throats off without them knowing that they were being slaughtered. That will teach them a painful lesson, never to challenge the authority.

You got to give this one to Umno and evil geniuses behind it! If only they were this meticulous in planning for the well-being of our country we will not need a clean election.

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