

Anything to hold on to power

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No one in Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's inner circle has the guts to tell him what others may be thinking of him, but we will; The PM is an opportunistic, power hungry egomaniac who will do anything to hold onto power.

His latest publicity gimmick should convince any doubters that Najib, his Cabinet and Umno are petrified of the rakyat's attraction to Bersih 3.0.

Umno is afraid to hold clean and fair elections.

The results of previous elections may have been predetermined, but today's discerning and less trusting public will not tolerate any cheating.

Umno's prolonged charade has eroded trust and despite its half-hearted jabs at reform, the rakyat doesn't think Umno can ever be taken seriously.

In an act of defiance against a rakyat which demands clean elections, Najib lauded around 10,000 petty traders in a grand function. The type of gathering, location and timing, were chosen for maximum impact.

The event was ostensibly for petty traders, some of whom complained about lost trade on April 28. It is significant that petty-traders had harassed Bersih's Ambiga Sreenevasan (in red) at her home, after the Bersih 3.0 rally.

The PM, who prides himself on being a moderate, was not magnanimous enough to condemn violence, but appeared to reward civil disobedience, by offering financial incentives to the petty-traders.

This is a variant to his infamous "You help me, I help you" barb. He hopes to spur more acts of violence against Bersih, the opposition and select civil society groups with the hint, that they could be amply rewarded.

Holding the event on the eve of the one-month anniversary of the Bersih rally, was an attempt to overshadow Bersih. Even the venue, Dataran Merdeka, was a poor attempt at concealing Najib's fear of Bersih and contempt for the rakyat.

Bersih was denied access to Dataran Merdeka because Najib feared the psychological impact on the rakyat. Dataran Merdeka is symbolic of Malaya's struggle.

Najib detested the obvious connection that the rakyat would equate the Bersih 3.0 event, with independence from Umno, the modern-day oppressor. Such was his desperation that a court

order was obtained to isolate the square.

Kuala Lumpur city mayor Ahmad Fuad Ismail claimed that Bersih could not hold its rally at Dataran Merdeka because of its political leanings.

"We stress that the use of Dataran Merdeka was rejected in line with Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur's (DBKL's) (policy to) reject any activities that have similar characteristics such as wanting to give ceramah, having political elements or dissenting elements, this is not the place for it". (sic)

Fuad seemed to accommodate Najib by breaking DBKL's own rules about last Saturday's petty trader rally, which was reported as a BN backed "1Malaysia" gathering.

Najib's insult to the nation, who had gathered for Malaysia's largest show of support for clean elections was obvious. The police were set on the rakyat and without mercy, tear gas canisters and water cannons were fired at them. Those who escaped were hounded and beaten up, journalists included.

Damansara Heights terrorised

Second, the quiet residential streets of Damansara Heights were terrorised by groups of people. If instruction did not come from the top, why else did the deputy IGP condone the actions of the petty traders? Why were enforcement officers from KL unable to find any petty traders?

Third, Najib's fiscal measures for the petty-traders despite their civil disobedience, is a deliberate snub to the rakyat.

Lastly, but most importantly, the PM kept silent when members of the public, Bersih and the opposition, were attacked by Umno party members and sympathisers.

More worrying is that none of Najib's cabinet condemned the violence. Neither did the heads of religion, the community leaders or even members of royalty.

Most of the people who perpetrated the violence were Malay. And yet, the Muslim community is muted. There are many enterprising and resourceful Muslims but their silence is unfathomable.

It is this group that one wishes to reach out to. They need to speak to members of their own community, and explain that Umno is "using them" and playing with them, like a cat plays with a mouse before it pounces on the hapless creature.

Of course, if some people believe Najib's promises then they should naturally vote for him. No one is stopping them; but before that, they should analyse Najib's policies, and see if any of them bear up to scrutiny.

At Saturday's rally, Najib said, "Who threw sand into the rice bowl of traders? They did not care that traders would suffer.....But now this done by people, millions of ringgit have been lost by

the traders." (sic)

Petty traders may have lost millions on the day of the Bersih rally but what about the billions which Najib allegedly wasted over the years? What about the billions allegedly squirreled away during his tenure as the defence minister?

What about similar amounts which members of his cabinet and the Umno "extended family" have been accused of sequestering? What does that say about him?

Billions wasted

Will the petty-traders realise that if not for those wasted billions, there would have been more money available to help them and other members of the community? What does that also say about the petty-traders?

The petty-traders harassing Ambiga share Najib's desire; they want Umno to win.

Jamal Md Yunus who is the leader of the pack of disgruntled traders drives around in fast cars, owns a chain of restaurants, and has a luxury car-dealership thus benefiting from the Approved Permit (AP) scam.

Despite having no SPM qualifications, he is a millionaire. He became successful not through hard work but via political patronage. Jamal is no ordinary petty trader and thus, cannot represent the interests of the true petty-trader by being their president.

Jamal makes a mockery of petty traders; Najib mocks decent hard-working people.

Najib is telling the rakyat that he is whiter than white and that he is a gift to democracy and the Malaysian public. He is not and we should not be fooled by his promises. Najib takes from the poor to give to the über-rich. He condones violence and electoral fraud. He is ineligible for election to the highest office in the land.

Again, he distracts us from electoral fraud. There will be more similar side-shows in the days ahead.