

## **Jusuf Kalla's poisonous fairy tale**

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**By S Thayaparan**

"Tapi, Indonesia menyimpan terlalu banyak rahasia. Dan keanekaragamannya pun amat kelewatan..." - Richard Lloyd Parry (In the Time of Madness: Indonesia on the Edge of Chaos)

COMMENT What I found more noxious than the haze supposedly emanating from Indonesia, was the fumes from the bridge burning of Jusuf Kalla, Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim's hopefully one-time confidant.

NONE Under the headline "Are you mad?", the Malay Mail through an interview conducted by the chief editor of Merdeka Online, outlined the "truth" about the alleged agreement between recently elected prime minister Najib Razak and Anwar brokered by none other than Jusuf (left) himself.

Never mind that such explosive revelations was consigned to the opinion sub-section of the newspaper after trumpeting it as headline news, but I suppose this points to the minimal vestige of journalistic integrity left in this mainstream media outlet.

I have always argued that Anwar and Pakatan Rakyat have never known how to choose their allies. My next piece will be on the rather disingenuous manner in how Pakatan has treated one of the few credible political parties here in Malaysia, PSM. However, Jusuf's "truths" needs to be examined a little more closely.

Whether by design or coincidence, the interview was neatly categorised into the usual five Umno talking points. I was surprised that seeing as how Anwar is blamed for nearly everything wrong with Malaysia, he was not blamed for the haze, the recent blackout (sic) in Sarawak and the semantic confusion over a street in Malacca.

The first point raised was "on the agreement between Najib and Anwar". Now with all the propaganda spread by both sides, what we can be assumed is that some form of agreement had taken place.

Since I would never, ever use the term "gentlemen" in the contexts of politics or in relation to politicians, what we can take away from this agreement is that neither side in all likelihood would have kept to their side of the bargain no matter who

won.

If Umno lost federal power, it would be conceivable with all their rhetoric pre and post-election of an ethnic clash, that "racial" incidents would necessitate a state of emergency. As for the alternative alliance, well, the posturing in the form of the 'Blackout' rallies and their rather diverse views on boycotting Parliament says it all.

Unsigned pact

I, for one, am peeved but not surprised that Anwar would seek the help of an Indonesian politician (if this is really the case) to broker an agreement with the current tenants of Putrajaya. Anyone with an understanding of our relations with our cousins from the south would understand that this is business as usual.

NONEWhat I find amusing is that Prime Minister Najib Razak, who although was shrewd enough not to sign any document, was amiable to the overtures of a foreign political operative meddling in the affairs of a government he claims to lead.

I do wonder how many others in Umno or BN knew of this "secret" agreement and just how far foreign interference is tolerated when it comes to the governance of this country. The same applies to Pakatan.

About the only credible aspect of Jusuf's opinion, was his perception that both Anwar and Najib were confident of winning the recently concluded general election. I will note however that I am surprised in the former's belief simply because the grassroots from the various oppositional factions were unsure of just how great the vocal showing of support would translate into votes.

There seems to be a disconnect within the opposition concerning this issue. Long-time electoral reforms activists (most of them non-partisan) tell me the issue of electoral malfeasances is never one of the talking points until post-elections where it is predicated on the desire to claim federal power and the whole issue devolves into trite clichés subsumed beneath general anti-establishment polemics which never gains any traction in the long term.

However by the second point - general election fraud issue - Jusuf descends into fairy tale land and Indonesia is noted for its rich intricate fairy tales. The sad part is that his fairy tales are not the awe-inspiring tales that I am used to, but rather venomous warnings tinged with the usual race baiting and character assassination, which is the nature of partisan politics and part of the tragic history of Indonesia and something that I wish never befalls us.

I have no idea if Anwar was waving his ink-stained finger at Yusuf that resulted in a lecture of the nature of indelible ink but I do now that the so-called indelible ink is not so indelible after all.

In addition, concerning phantom voters and their easily identifiable nature, I would remind Jusuf that many of his compatriots have suddenly had a racial conversion and become "Malay" along with thousands of other foreigners. Are these voters phantom voters, probably not, but as the recent Sabah Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) has confirmed, citizenship for votes is not something unimaginable in Malaysian politics.

While Anwar may be faulted in crying wolf in the context of his resignation from politics, he is hardly "mad" for assuming that the popular vote does grant him legitimacy in the political arena, regardless of the nature of our electoral system. Moreover, how exactly can Anwar be "mad" when by Jusuf's own admission he could be the president of Indonesia because he won the popular vote? In other words for Jusuf, madness is contextual.

#### Enemies of Islam

However, it really gets nasty by the third point - the Black 505 rallies. Here Jusuf implies that the rallies only benefit the "enemies of Islam" and since Anwar (he claims) has "no control over the DAP" - the so-called enemies of Islam are the Chinese community. What of PAS and the majority Malay PKR who supported the rallies? Are they enemies of Islam too?

In other words, the only allies of Islam are those who are subservient. Then what of the Chinese MCA who staked the anti-PAS ground before the election? Moreover, what of Umno who allowed the MCA to raise the Islamic bogeyman specter and who warned of the implementation of hudud if ever PAS came into power.

Of course, such nuance escapes Jusuf who is buried beneath his conspiracy theories of corporate or otherwise elements from Turkey, Washington, the Philippines and "maybe also Thailand and China" intent on subverting control of Putrajaya through the nefarious Pakatan. By golly, all these countries have designs on little old Malaysia and the only thing keeping them at bay is Umno.

anwar with jusuf kalla 101204 talking Jusuf keeps asking "us" to investigate but maybe he should have named those elements or at the very least, the chief editor of Merdeka Online should have asked Jusuf to name those elements that are evidently intent on destroying the democratic process of this country. I mean, wasn't this journalist even a little bit curious as to which companies or individuals

were funding the downfall of this democratically-elected government?

I admit I lost interest in the fourth and fifth points in this expose - Susilo meeting and Washington elements, Lahad Datu incursion - where in the former, the Washington state police was implicated in the plot by Anwar to subvert whatever laughable process we have in this country with a meet with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

In addition, in the latter, Joseph Estrada's name was dredged up again in connection with the Lahad Datu incursion. Jusuf again advised us to investigate. Of course, he tells us to investigate but never once points us in the direction that would reveal the truth.

In the end, what oppositional supporters should really be asking, is this: Is this the kind of individual Anwar "trusted" to broker an agreement for the political power factions in this country? If so, who is mad now?

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