

It's not about kangkung, it's about inflation

MalaysiaKini.com

Jan 18, 2014

YOURSAY 'It's the continually rising cost of living that's hurting the rakyat.'

I like to eat kangkung, says Najib

Unspin: It is perfectly logical (albeit naive and comical) to use the price of kangkung to demonstrate the principle of supply and demand.

However, are these principles of supply and demand and free market forces also applied to the price of rice, sugar, flour, water, electricity, toll, cars and most government projects in Malaysia?

In short, if market forces are allowed to reign in Malaysia, most of us can even afford eat imported vegetables, let alone the humble kangkung.

Changeagent: PM Najib Razak, why limit your example to kangkung only? What about other food staples like rice, oil, flour, sugar, eggs and seafood, which we also like to eat?

Oh wait, their prices have gone up, not down. Bummer.

"Meanwhile, Najib praised the action of traders under the Malaysian Muslim Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association (Presma), who, he said, were more responsible in ensuring that the prices of food and drinks were not raised."

Two days ago, teh tarik was RM1 and roti telur was RM1.50. Yesterday, the same mamak restaurant was charging RM1.20 for teh tarik and roti telur was RM1.70. So much for credibility.

Fair Play: Dear PM, here is something for you to ponder seriously - perception is reality and perception is everything.

To the ordinary rakyat, how could they reconcile your comments on bread-and-butter issues such as kangkung, teh tarik and price hikes with reports, perhaps skewed, about the lavish lifestyle of your family.

Even your own brother saw it fit to yearn for the good old days of your father - of

frugality, sincerity, passion to serve and most important of all, public accountability.

Geronimo: You like to eat kangkung, that is your business. Marie Antoinette too, liked to eat cake but the remark she made about the poor people of France that they too could have their cake, had her head in the guillotine.

Not Convinced: Did I hear, "Let them eat kangkung"?

Hang Babeuf: He may, as he says, like kangkung. But after this latest embarrassing stupidity, kangkung will always have a bitter taste for the PM. Never to be really enjoyed again, only a bitter political aftertaste in the mouth.

And Popeye loved his spinach too. That did not qualify him to be PM.

Rightan: Why has kangkung become a laughing stock?

1. People are bored.
2. As a way to seek relief from the current inflation 'fever'.
3. As a way to hit out at politicians by default and in this case, the default object is kangkung since kangkung cannot respond/sue.

Stories: Najib, did you notice your cup of teh tarik no longer comes full? In a while more, they will need to downsize the cup.

P Dev Anand Pillai: Dear PM, It would have been better if you had used a different analogy.

If you had spoken about the government's plans and actions to reduce its spending and provide better services to the people with what it has now, you would have been appreciated.

But you decided to ridicule the people, so this is the result. You have to note that ultimately you are the captain of the ship. In your 'democracy' you call the shots, so do it equitably.

Sali Tambap: Point taken, but Najib's argument doesn't fly in the face of rising prices and cost of living. When petrol price is increased, all activities that involve transport will incur higher costs.

When toll is increased, motorists will spend more. When GST (Goods and Services

Tax) is introduced, household expenses will increase. The hawker will say one kilo of rice noodle (meehoon) costs more now so he has to increase the price of his meehoon soup.

The trickle-down effect of high expenses being incurred does affect everything else. Maybe the price of kangkung is still stable for now. But I would not put my ringgit on it that it will not rise later.

Najib is trying to make political mileage with this act but he must recognise it works both ways. You fail, you should expect ridicule too.

Onyourtoes: You just gave RM1 million in government money to a cooperative (Presma) to run its business and then you praised that cooperative for charging fairer and more reasonable rates compared to others.

Did other outlets get a similar allocation? PM, I think you obviously do not know how economics work.

The Mask: Mr PM, you really have a small mind. Even the BBC is ridiculing you on kangkung. How can you compare the price of kangkung with the price hikes of electricity tariffs or the toll?

By the way, I don't see your logic of first raising the prices and cutting subsidies and then forming a committee to look into ways of helping the rakyat to cope with it.

Oracle: Najib said he would go down to the ground to check on prices of goods more closely and would also take the opportunity to promote shops offering reasonable prices to the people.

A great PR (public relations) idea, presumably promoted by your multi-billion dollar consultants.

But how about governing the nation for a change and addressing the urgent issues you have avoided? Never occurred to you, huh?

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