

**It's elementary, my dear PMO!**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Feb 12, 2015**

**By Stephen Ng**

COMMENT In my article yesterday, I wrote that the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) did the wrong thing by releasing the press statement shortly after the Federal Court's judgment was read out.

Sentencing had not even been decided upon. Of course, if I were Anwar Ibrahim, I would smell "something is rotten" in the apex court, especially since the basis for the judgment also appeared to be highly disputable.

A top legal eagle in this country who was listening to the entire judgment told me that she found it "so disgusting", not to mention that most of us who were picking up the news in pieces from Malaysiakini and other portals also felt the same.

Nearly every other person that I spoke to and every press statement from major powers in the world that I read, believe that the opposition leader is a victim of a ploy to finish off his political career.

Now that he is in Sungai Buloh prison, even the PMO's statement is getting brickbats from ordinary people like me. I would have left it the way it is until I read something in an English mainstream medium in which the way it was written annoyed me.

It appears to me that this is nothing but the work of a junior PR person, who lacks insight on why timeliness in releasing a press statement is just as important as writing a good defence piece on behalf of the bosses.

### **Insights set us apart**

To the media people at the PMO, I say, It's elementary, my dear Watson.

For this, I have the PMO's office to thank because from the big mistake that they have done, as a media consultant I have learnt that there is a right timing for everything.

It does not matter any more how you wish to justify your actions, since everyone agrees with me that a media statement can be written in either direction, embargoed and released when the bosses give the green light.

This I do not dispute, but it is the timeliness in which such a statement was released that I believe you have once again fumbled.

From the way the press statement was written, it should come only after the dust has settled. For the next week or so, you can expect more press statements to be issued by both

local and international bodies as well as the superpowers in the world.

The Malaysiakini office was in fact inundated with the number of press statements that they received from around the globe.

Even an open petition on the White House portal has received over 34,000 signatures from people around the world who knew about the petition.

After all, we are living in a global village, and Malaysians cannot continue to live under a coconut shell, thinking that because we are a sovereign nation, what happened to Anwar Ibrahim would not impact the way how leaders of other democratic countries see us or deal with us in the future.

Therefore, those who are planning to do a demonstration at the embassies should just think twice, how they are turning this country into another big laughing stock.

Face the facts: A press statement - one that is released at the wrong time - has done more damage to the country and the prime minister's reputation than anything!

### **Numerous mistakes, consistently**

It suffices me to say that the same PR team must be the ones behind Najib Abdul Razak's PR boo-boos. If it had been Anwar, I believe he would have been more savvy to mentor his PR team well.

Allow me to elaborate. The whole nation remembers Najib's "kangkung" comments and his recent "every Malaysian should play golf" statement that went viral. I may not take offence at what he said, but one thing sure did - and I still remember vividly what he did the next day after news of the missing MH370 aircraft was flashed across the world.

This is what made the prime minister himself appeared totally "out of touch" with the world around him. This is the result of having been raised with a silver spoon and no thanks to the PR team who organised his media appearances.

At the heights of anxiety over the MAS plane, Najib appeared in a supermarket holding up a RM1 chicken. I told myself when I read the news: "Isn't this something!" Till today, I can never find a chicken that is selling for RM1, not to mention that the PM should have at least appeared leading the press conference and answering questions fielded by international journalists.

The crisis could have been turned into an opportunity for Malaysia to showcase its ability to handle a major crisis like the disappearance of its aircraft, more so, when the country was literally spending millions to promote its Visit Malaysia Year.

Instead, the PM received brickbats from the public for his lack of leadership. Call him an opportunist, but a more savvy Anwar would have done the country some justice by

stepping right into the crisis and taking the role as the country's leader, instead of being goaded by some junior PR people to appear with a RM1 chicken.

Along with it, Anwar would have shown to the world that Malaysians take great concern about the missing plane. Such is expected of the country's top leader, not from his cousin or some government officials.

And for your information, Mr Watson, even my child's toy chicken (right) costs more than RM1! And every time I see this plastic chicken and pick it up, the image of the prime minister holding up his RM1 chicken is still vivid on my mind.

---

STEPHEN NG is an ordinary citizen with an avid interest in following political developments in the country since 2008.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/289036>