

Will the real magician please stand up
Malaysiakini.com
May 2, 2007
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In the April 29, 2007 New Sunday Times, Kalimullah Hassan asked, in his front page article, "Can handkerchiefs fly?"

He narrated the story of a young boy fascinated by a 'magician's' claim that he could make a handkerchief fly.

The purpose of the magic show was to attract onlookers to buy the 'minyak geliga' he was selling.

When confronted by the boy, the magician said, "Hang bodoh kah? Mana boleh sapu tangan terbang?" (Are you stupid or what? How can a handkerchief fly?)

Kalimullah was equating the magician with Anwar Ibrahim and Parti Keadilan Rakyat in the Ijok by-election. They came, told high tales and vanished to the next stop, so he said.

I would like to share my experience with roadside magicians.

A few years back when I was at the Sungai Buloh mosque for my Friday prayers, I stopped at the gates. There a man claimed he could make money – real bank notes – from pieces of newspaper.

This I had to see. He told many tales. But in the end he burnt some newspaper in a steel plate and placed it in an empty wooden box. After some mantras, his assistant opened the box and to the amazement of all present, it was filled with one ringgit notes.

He invited people to touch the money and even take some. It sure looked like real money – not the new crisp ones, but used notes. I dare not put my hands on any for fear that the few ringgits I have in my pockets will instead find its way in to the box.

The magician then brought out some small keris and offered them to the crowd at RM100 a piece. He said, with the keris, anybody could make money on their own. People took out their wallets and cash was exchanged with the small keris, neatly placed in envelopes.

He promised to make RM50 and RM100 notes afterwards. More people took up the offer of owning a money-making-keris on hearing that.

Just about when the keris were sold out, the sound of azan was heard. The magician being the 'pious' man he was quickly wrapped his trade and urged everybody to go to the mosque. He will mint the RM50 and RM100 notes after prayers, he promised.

Now, this is a true story. It happened in Sungai Buloh, just next door to Ijok. Last week during the Ijok by-election, I see Khairy, Najib, Samy Vellu and the rest of the BN folks turn magicians.

They were minting money for Ijok and Selangor Menteri Besar Khir Toyo promised more after the election.

But the RM36 million question is, will they all still be in Ijok after the "buy-election"?

Or would they move on to mint more money elsewhere, hand out loose change to the people and keep promising the 50s and 100s while, in actual fact, keeping all the real big money to themselves?

Come on Kalimullah, you know the real story. Will they actually hand out the big money? Then, show me the real colour of money – now that the election is over and done with!

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/66723>