

## **Vanity, desperation or political posturing?**

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Most prime ministers wait till they leave office to write a book, but Najib Abdul Razak has found time for a 300-page pictorial hardback, 'Najib Tun Razak Melakar Transformasi Malaysia' (Najib Tun Razak Draws Up Malaysia's Transformation).

It is curious that this book was approved for publication. To launch a book after only one year in office seems premature. Najib has not faced his most difficult challenge, yet. If he did not have anything to do with this book, it must have been political posturing.

- \* Was the book written because of his vanity?
- \* Is he riding on the tide of popularity and gearing up for an early election?
- \* Or is he desperate?

Boanti petrol price hike protest 120608th Najib and his deputy Muhyiddin Yassin have misjudged the mood of the nation.

When we were told to tighten our belts, we expected the same of our government. Public sector spending should be reduced, but the Information Communication and Culture Ministry has seen fit to publish a glossy, coffee-table book.

It would be interesting to note the cost of producing this book and what the Treasury was charged.

Even if ghostwriters were engaged, Najib's input would have been needed regarding the direction and content of the book.

We would rather he focuses his mind on more pressing matters: The economy needs salvaging. The people need uniting. His relationship with Muhyiddin needs patching up. This book seems to be a waste of time and resources.

The book launch at the Handicrafts yatim pc 020709 01 Complex surpasses that of any other author. It was graced by Information Communication and Culture Minister Rais Yatim (right), ministry secretary-general Kamaruddin Siaraf and director-general of information Abdullah Morad.

Key Performance Indicators, a topic discussed in the book, seem to be lost on this crowd. This event was not done on a small scale.

It is odd that Najib did not promote his own book. Muhyiddin must have bridled at the prospect of being made to launch a book for a person he has overtly challenged.

Many will recall Muhyiddin's defiant "I am Malay first, Malaysian second", which went against Najib's '1Malaysia' policy.

At the book launch, Muhyiddin said: "The prime minister is my boss. The issue of loyalty should not even be questioned."

He was proud that their working relationship is featured in one of the chapters and that his

loyalty to the PM has never faltered.

Muhyiddin stressed that there has never been a crisis with Najib and that their alleged discord was fabricated by the opposition.

He declared, "I have smuhyiddin yassin and najib and umnoaid this many times, I will always support him, Najib."

Muhyiddin fails to realise that his repeated emphasis on this relationship is unconvincing and seems to suggest the opposite.

He insisted that the relationship was harmonious: "I have always been supportive of the PM especially now that he has given me the responsibility to be his deputy as well as the education minister."

Najib is wily and has probably adopted the strategy of 'keep your friends close, and your enemies closer'.

Misguided notions

To think that this book will be able to 'refute the various slanders made by certain groups against the government and national leaders', shows a very naïve disposition. The only way to effectively counter malice is to maintain a dignified silence.

To believe that the book is capable of changing the mindset and misperceptions of certain groups who had doubted the prime minister's sincerity, shows a lack of empathy with the people.

The rakyat believes that abuses corruption and judiciary 240507 of power, high-level corruption and crime all go unpunished. The public will never alter their mindset, if politicians won't alter their behaviour. The common man feels threatened, unsafe and that he has no legal redress.

The best way to prove the critics wrong is by deeds and not by writing a book.

People agree that development will be good for the country, but as always, the PM has been far too short on specifics. For instance, when he mentioned that Malaysia should become a high-income economy, he didn't specify how. He also failed to address the shortage of skilled and semi-skilled workers.

When he is short on detail, he should not blame people for being critical of him and his government.

The rise of extremist race groups makes a mockery of the '1Malaysia' concept. If Najib wants to succeed, he'll have to abandon the divisive personalities in his government and find more effective ways to build bipartisan consensus.

Failure to do so will only galvanise the opposition.

The book aboutrosmah mansor najib wife Najib's transformation of Malaysia included a chapter dedicated to 'The First Lady', who has 'made significant contributions towards his success as a national leader'.

We are told that the book was to refute slander spread by the opposition, so this book is either an ego-trip or a 'confessional'.

As most Malaysians read fewer than two books a year, it is doubtful that the readership will be large. However, the timing of the launch will ensure that many Hari Raya hampers will include this book, although RM98 a copy is a bit steep!

The publication of this book, now, shows that Najib has an odd sense of priority and is making a desperate effort to convey information to the rakyat.

He is premature to write about the trials and tribulations faced after one year as prime minister. Judging by events, it might be downhill from here. Is that why the book has come out now?

But the book that I would really like to read would be about the true relationship of Najib and Muhyiddin. I will probably have to wait until one, or both, are out of power.

Will they come clean? Or will someone else spill the beans, like Lord Mandelson who exposed the stormy relationship of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown?

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