

**Who stole the NEP agenda?
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Racism and ethnic bigotry have reached a stage in Malaysia that they need to be checked and nipped in the bud! But this concern for the future of our nation-state should not only be limited to national unity and religious tolerance alone.

Nazir Abdul Razak (right), the youngest son of Abdul Razak Hussein, recently said that the NEP has been bastardised. That is a very serious statement coming from the son of the Prime Minister who launched the NEP. After all Abdul Razak is considered the father of the NEP.

The NEP was born after our self-imposed martial law period when the Parliament was suspended after the May 13 episode and order was only established when the New Economic Policy was agreed on, established and launched as the way forward for the nation for the next 20 years; 1970-1990.

Consensus was achieved through the first-ever National Consultative Council. We are now well past that First Outline Perspective Plan (OPP1) period and the first 20 years of the NEP. Why is it then the NEP has not been addressed adequately and fully achieved?

We are now another 15 years after the NEP era and our leaders now admit that it has been derailed from the original intention. Why and how? Who are these "bastards" who stole the agenda and caused the son to disclaim this agenda from the Father of Development of our nation?

I therefore observe with sadness as the history of this nation is being rewritten by false and insincere actors, all in the name of triumphant politics. The Tunku and Abdul Razak were statesmen, not just mere politicians. They were always concerned for the next generation, and never just the next election. True leadership always requires that.

Even Dr Mahathir Mohamad was a statesman, until he lost sight of the agenda and gave up all other values to ensure and secure his own survival. The Tunku and Abdul Razak did not have such a privilege as they did not ever overstay their welcome; as we all fully know!

My pet theory: From GEM to RM

I am not a politician or even a political observer or commentator. I am simply a Malaysian citizen whose father, school and God has taught him to serve the nation before all else. That is all I seek to do.

Let me therefore give my version of the bastardisation of the NEP agenda and all things Malaysian. The NEP when born was an excellent agenda which I fully subscribed to. In fact, after I was offered a role in the public service, I even turned down a private sector offer because I wanted to help implement the NEP in its original form.

The original goals were to achieve national unity via the twin prongs of eradication of poverty and restructuring of society to reflect a truly Malaysian citizenry or what was later called a Bangsa Malaysia.

These goals were very achievable and all plans were laid in the Abdul Razak (right) era under the NEP and the then-National Operations Room system. The values were to

achieve both the goals without too much pain and hurt of any sector or community; stealing from none but growing all.

The central thesis was the accelerated growing of the cake, with the equitable distribution of the growth portion without negating our capacity to grow and create new value.

The Implementation, Coordination and Development Administration Unit (ICDAU) of the PM's Department was assigned as the primary custodian of the NEP Agenda; and the Bumiputera Commercial and Industrial Community Bureau or BCIC (born in ICDAU) was the commercialisation arm of the economic growth portion with an equitable built-in distribution model, and the Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB) as the central growth distribution agency of the government of Malaysia.

Through the PNB, all poorer Malaysians could benefit from the new and accelerated growth. PNB was created as a trustee agency for the poorer portions of Malaysians.

The State Development Officer or SDO (an institution created to transcend the traditional state boundaries) was to enable delivery of development on the ground where it hurt people the most. Abdul Razak used to say it "put the finger where the pulse was not beating!"

The state governments did not have the financial or development capability on the ground for most physical infrastructure development under our federal-state model of governance. Local authorities were financially poor!

'Derailment of the national agenda'

Our greatest failure of the NEP was the "derailment of the national agenda". It unfortunately started after Mahathir was challenged for the leadership of Umno. That bitter fight that started with the other potential Umno leaders has never ended until today.

tengku razaleigh hamzah 270908Proxy fights amongst followers continue. Anwar Ibrahim too continues that fight until today; as does Tengku Razaleigh (left), or Musa Hitam. Their personal battles over the leadership and direction of the nation have never ended and never will.

In that original fight, Mahathir brought in his own team of mercenary loyalists, who could be "paid off" in ringgit that makes sense. That Ringgit-Malaysia model of development was thus born as an alternative to Abdul Razak's Growth with Equity Model (GEM).

The alternative is sometimes called the Raja Mahathir or the RM model. The RM is today the operative value of all traditional Umnoputras. What then is this new model; which denies the GEM?

Under this RM model, money can be made under the NEP agenda by any bumiputra entity and it is legal and legitimate (to steal) as long as the policy allows for it. You can break rules or whatever but the end always justifies the means. It is Machiavellian at its worst!

The primary concern of Abdul Razak's eradication of poverty therefore became subservient to the "skimming off the top!" The top 30% was more important than the bottom 30%. In effect, there was a resultant separation of the 'bumis' from the 'putras.'

This was the direct result and cause of the so-called New Umno which created the Melayu Baru. The New Umno was grown after the trunk of the Malaysian tree was badly damaged

as a result of this personal ego fight in and around 1988.

The poor became ordinary Malaysian on the ground and all those who did an honest day's job. The political elites won the day; or, at least they think so! The Putras (usually the BNputras) became the connected who could collect without too much hassle or burden money which always came from the public coffers. Therefore the PKFZ scandal is nothing extraordinary; it is simply a prime example of the RM model of development and growth!

In America they call this 'ugly capitalism'; wherein illegal and unproductive papers can generate very artificial wealth, which can also disappear overnight. Therefore trillions have been spent by the government of the US to bail out failed banks and corporations to support the rich and famous while the poor the world are still with us. In Malaysia before the last GE it was called "Surat Wahyu!"

Whither Malaysia?

We R Malaysia! Yes, we the people are Malaysia; not just the government or the private sector under the so-called Malaysia Inc model. We make up the electorate of Malaysia and our respective communities are truly Malaysia; Negara Ku.

NONEIt is time for us to take charge and begin to drive the destiny of this nation. Let us learn to celebrate our beautiful nation, her heritage and her history of how a small nation of 11 states grew to become a new federation but within which we learned to recognise and observe the dignity of all ethnicities!

We R Malaysia and we can learn to celebrate the diversities. Let us celebrate because we are Malaysia! May God bless our Malaysia Day!

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