

PM Might As Well Abandon The Corruption Fight
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Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak might as well abandon the Fighting Corruption NKRA or New Key Results Area in his GTP if he dares not compel his Ministers and Deputy Ministers to publicly declare their assets and set up a Royal Commission of Inquiry(RCI) into the RM250 million cows & condos scandal or the RM1.077 billion in illicit money(including corruption funds) secretly taken out of the country during 2000-9.

The Prime Minister had announced in April 2009 that there were 6 NKRA's in his GTP, one of which was fighting corruption. Nearly 3 years later, the Prime Minister has no achievements to show. He has presided over the worst Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranking and score for Malaysia, dipping to No 60 out of 183 countries with a score of 4.3 out of 10.

The failures of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), despite being given huge annual budgets of over RM200 million since 2011, is only overshadowed by abuses within its ranks. Apart from allegations of corruption, there were two tragic deaths at MACC premises-Teoh Beng Hock in July 2009 and senior Customs officer Ahmad Sarbaini Mohamed on April 6, 2011.

Parliament approved a RM202.2 million budget for MACC for 2011 and all it has to show is the country's lowest CPI ranking of No. 60 and lowest-ever score of 4.3. In 1996, Parliament approved a budget of RM29.4 million for the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) and that was the year when Malaysia was ranked No. 26 and achieved the highest CPI score of 5.32 in the past 17 years.

Malaysians are entitled to compare the budgets given to ACA in 1996 and to MACC in 2011, and the TI CPI of Malaysia in these two years. Why MACC, despite being given a budget almost seven times that of 1996, had brought Malaysia's TI CPI in 2011 to the lowest ranking of 60 and score of 4.3 when in 1996 we could be ranked No. 26 with a score of 5.32?

It would appear that the bigger the budget and more staffing and resources given to MACC, the more corrupt Malaysia has become. Where have the increased RM172.8 million in the anti-corruption budgets between 1996 and 2011 gone to?

1996 29.5 million

1997 32.4 million

1998 32.2 million

1999 38.2 million

2000 41.8 million

2002 63.8 million

2003 67.7 million

2004 70.4 million

2005 76.4 million

2006 99.1 million

2007 148.1 million

2008 146.7 million

2009 162.1 million

2010 156.8 million

2011 202.2 million

2012 211.2 million

Worse is the refusal by Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to establish a RCI into the cows and condos scandal involving the family of a senior Cabinet Minister with the lame excuse that MACC is investigating the matter. It is precisely because the public has lost confidence in the MACC, as shown by the drastic drop in the TI rankings, that a RCI is needed to get to the bottom of the cows and condos scandal.

The Prime Minister's NKRA of fighting corruption is also in trouble following the refusal of Ministers and Deputy Ministers to publicly declare their assets. On 29.1.2012, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department VK Liew even justified his refusal to do so by questioning why Penang state excos took nearly 4 years to publicly declare their assets.

Should not BN leaders be ashamed of themselves that it took Penang PR state government less than 4 years to do so as compared to BN's complete failure to do so after 55 years? Penang's state excos' asset declaration included asset and liabilities as at 8 March 2008 and as at 31.12.2011. Further, our asset declaration was made public, uploaded on the internet as well as verified by an independent audit accounting firm, KPMG.

Unless the Prime Minister gives MACC the independent powers to prosecute freely and is answerable only to Parliament, set up RCI for scandals and compel public declaration of assets, Malaysia's Corruption Perception Index under the Transparency International will only deteriorate.

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