

**DPM's visit helps clear the air**  
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**TRUTH REVEALED: Indonesian leaders say they now better understand Malaysia's political goings-on**

AT times, in the face of a constant barrage of hate-filled venom, half-truths, outright lies, well-crafted vilification and raw propaganda from the opposition, an unconventional approach to untangle the web of deception that has been so vigorously spun, is essential.

This is especially so when it threatens to scuttle the deep ties between two nations.

Umno, in an unprecedented approach of directly engaging the top leaders of Indonesia's influential political parties that seem to be the focus of opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's high-stakes popularity contest, is optimistic that the systematic indoctrination of misconceptions of Malaysia and its leadership, could be better fought this way.

Tuesday saw leaders of at least three main parties of this nation of more than 234 million, making a beeline for a meeting with Umno leaders to get the other side of the picture, said to be badly painted by Anwar.

Deputy Prime Minister and Umno deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, flanked by a solid phalanx of delegates to set the record straight, believes that these leaders know better than to swallow lock, stock and barrel, just one side of a convoluted and half-baked story.

Unravelling deception from truth and distinguishing fact from fiction for Anwar's foreign audiences may be a monumental task as Anwar's kind of cherry-picking mainly focuses on issues that more often than not, touch raw nerves, stoking and fanning emotions.

Indonesians have heard repeatedly from Anwar how the Malaysian democracy is rigged to benefit Barisan Nasional, while conveniently forgetting to mention that the ruling party lost five states to him and his Putrajaya-hungry comrades in the last general election.

His popularity among his Indonesian audience seemed to soar at the height of the Indonesian maid abuse issue and how such cases would be unheard of, if he became prime minister. That they were isolated cases and how he planned on guaranteeing that were never broached.

It is also not Anwar to let the opportunity to play hero slip by him as he pledged to resolve the problem of overlapping border claims as well as cultural rights between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, if he ever helmed the country's leadership.

From his meetings with these influential leaders -- many of whose supporters were believed to be deliberately and repeatedly riled to react negatively to the Malaysian administration over these "sensitive issues" -- Muhyiddin concluded that Anwar's political alchemy had become irrelevant to the republic.

Leaders of the three main parties -- Annas Urbaningrum, Aburizal Bakrie and Megawati Sukarnoputeri from the ruling Democratic Party, Golkar and the Indonesia Democratic Party of Struggle respectively, said they now better understood Malaysia's geopolitical climate.

"Even Anwar's close friends are beginning to see his true colours and don't buy his stories... so much so that issues that he had been raising were not even in the agenda.

"Maybe he is not important here any more.

"Those I met know the real situation and for Indonesians in general, they appreciate the healthy bilateral relationship that both governments enjoy.

"They will not be easily swayed by deceit and lies by the opposition," Muhyiddin told the Malaysian media at the end of his six-day visit to Indonesia, which began with Jakarta and ended in Bali. Muhyiddin, as education minister, also attended the Seventh Asean Education Ministers' Meeting in Yogyakarta.

Describing his meeting with influential Indonesian politicians as fruitful as they committed to strengthen their bilateral relations and not allow interference from external parties, Muhyiddin pledged to sustain a close connection with the parties through Umno and its arms, aside from the already solid government-to-government channel.

His plans for Umno and the Indonesian parties to ensure an unbreakable bond was shared by Aburizal, who described the new link established with Umno during the Jakarta meeting, as a strong second diplomatic bridge between political leaders in Indonesia and the biggest component party of Malaysia's ruling coalition.

For Golkar, whose relationship with Umno dates back to more than 50 years, cementing further its ties with Umno takes priority over a future with a party whose raison d'etre is to champion the cause of certain individuals.

The commitment to ensure political stability in Malaysia and Indonesia for the sake of moving the region forward, also came from Annas who, during his heart-to-heart meeting with Muhyiddin and his delegation, said the two countries' strong relations were pivotal in ensuring just that.

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