

8 reasons why BN is great for business

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A minister recently said, as ministers are wont to say ridiculous things, a convenience store owes its success to the Barisan Nasional. What? Yes, exactly Tiger's reaction. Here's eight more reasons from Tiger why BN is great for business.

Tiger is a big fan of junk food – in between the usual gourmet meals of barbecued hyena ribs, sizzling ox and sweet and sour yak.

When craving strikes, Tiger would saunter down to its favourite convenience store 7-Eleven and pick out a few packs of salty peanuts, chocolate bars and soda to keep going until the next bloody proper meal.

Snacking is an unhealthy habit, some may say, but Tiger is a staunch believer of convenience stores and can't imagine life without them.

So when Minister of Domestic Trade, Co-operatives and Consumerism Hasan Malek declares proudly that the success of 7-Eleven in Malaysia, as well as other franchises and businesses in Malaysia, is due to the stability of the Barisan Nasional (BN) government, Tiger's ears perked up.

"In truth, ladies and gentlemen, we forget that all of this is because of the Barisan Nasional government, our government, that provided the facilities for this," beamed Hasan during a 7-Eleven press conference for its imminent public listing.

Bravo, dear minister. It takes a strong man to state the obvious and Tiger will brook no arguments from silly naysayers who doubt the minister's proclamations.

In fact, to illustrate the minister's claims further, Tiger has its own top eight reasons why the BN government has over the years, directly or indirectly, been a supreme influence in the success of Malaysian commerce.

Drumroll, please...

8) Protecting the nation's industries from the evils of competition, cost efficiency, consumer choice and economies of scale. Prime example is national car Proton that still clings to government bosom since its launch in 1983.

Perhaps Proton's paltry 138,000 units sold last year, far from its target of 350,000, has something to do with it. But at least soon all taxis sold locally will be standard brown Proton Exoras, a scheme (and choice of colour) that should not be pooh-poohed.

Such is the popularity of the BN government's protectionism that even local steelmakers have recently politely requested for Putrajaya's help to raise tariffs for imports. Or else they would close shop abruptly and take their businesses to Indonesia.

7) World leaders in concessionaires, especially in industries that least need privatisation such as public roads, tolls, power and water where the BN government has repeatedly handed over the keys (and obscene profits) of strategic industries to a handful of gleeful corporate figures.

6) Consistently taking Malaysia to new heights and hikes as shown by the blitz of higher assessment rates, toll rates, electricity, petrol and gas tariffs, public transportation charges and food prices announced by the BN government in recent months.

5) Transcendent agricultural programmes that have defied conventional wisdom and logic, such as the National Feedlot Corporation (NFC). It was initiated by the BN government to meet the country's cattle requirements and somehow mutated into expensive condominium purchases.

The NFC gave momentary hope to downtrodden farmers all around the world that their stable of cows could perhaps magically turn into shiny roofs over their heads. Yet, the seamless synergy of livestock and property still stumps many seasoned analysts who have yet to grasp NFC's purportedly strategic beef-to-cement metamorphosis.

4) Dynamic labour policies are a vital cornerstone of the BN government, as displayed by outspoken lecturer and columnist Ridhuan Tee who, seemingly taking cue from Putrajaya's racial-based policies, has angrily refuted non-Bumiputera's significant contributions to the nation's economy.

Even if they flee, Tee says, the country will be more than capable of absorbing the shock of losing these ingrates, because as many as five million foreign immigrants are on perpetual standby to replace our law-abiding, hard working and tax-paying non-Malay citizens.

3) A genuine appreciation of talent, especially those who have already left the country. The BN government has even set up a special-purpose vehicle TalentCorp Malaysia to attract world-class lawyers, doctors, engineers, bankers, financiers,

accountants, consultants, economists, architects, entrepreneurs, traders, electricians, designers, scientists, programmers, artists, physicists, executives, technicians, craftsmen, researchers, professors, academicians and many other dynamic professionals and facilitate their return to Malaysia from overseas.

For reasons why they left in the first place, please see (4).

2) We can sell ice to eskimos, or at least that's what we should all aspire to be in terms of entrepreneurship and versatility in BN's true "Malaysia Boleh" spirit. A good case in point is former Terengganu Menteri Besar (MB) Ahmad Said's controversial 15-day visit to Antarctica earlier this year for, among other things, "research on climate change." This despite Malaysia's baking heat being the polar opposite of Antarctica's teeth-chattering temperatures.

Ahmad has since proved doubters dead wrong. His trip was indeed fruitful, in more ways than one. For example, he has obviously mastered Antarctica's art of cold storage so deftly that he has effectively frozen himself (and a few others) out of the state administration recently.

1) Now every Malaysian can fly – to Cayman Islands. Or to be precise, every Malaysian taxpayer's money is flying to Cayman Islands via mysterious state sovereign fund 1MDB (1Malaysia Development Bhd, or better known in some cynical circles as "1 Malaysia's Disappearing Billions").

An estimated RM7 billion of public monies have found shelter in these scenic tax havens, although exactly what they are being invested in is still scant knowledge and its cost of borrowing is supposedly higher than its returns on investment.

It's an unbelievable feat of capital flight, courtesy of the BN government, on a wing and hopefully more than just a few prayers.

Well that's eight from us. I am sure, you citizen of Malaysia, or interested observer will have many more of your own. If you want to add to Tiger's, well, just drop us a line.

GRRRRR!

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