

NAJIB MADE A BIGGER MESS THAN PAK LAH, WHO MADE A BIGGER MESS THAN...

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By Super Admin

And the list goes on and on — the ills facing Malaysia that have nothing to do with money but definitely make Malaysia suck big time. Money aside, can Najib reverse all this and is he prepared to do so? If he does (and assuming he can satisfy Malaysians regarding the questions surrounding 1MDB) many years down the road history may have something very different to say about Najib.

NO HOLDS BARRED

Raja Petra Kamarudin

Two weeks ago, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he might have made mistakes when he was Prime Minister and he may have lost a lot of money but at least you know where the money was lost. In Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak's case we do not know where the money went and how it was lost and whether it was actually siphoned out and ended up in someone's pocket.

Of course, if you quote a figure back in the 1980s (which is more than 30 years ago when a BMW 7 series cost only RM80,000) and you compare that figure to today (when the equivalent BMW model costs RM800,000) the figure 30 years ago appears lower.

I, however, do not compare it on that basis.

I mean, 40 years ago back in the 1970s I could buy 100 rambutans for RM1.00. That works out to one Sen per fruit. I would spend RM10 and walk away with 40 or 50 durians. So while I may compare rambutans to rambutans or durians to durians you have to also take the cost into consideration to do a fair comparison.

In other words, the RM200 billion that you lost 30 years ago cannot be compared to RM200 billion today. You need to multiply the RM200 billion of 30 years ago many times over. And it depends on whether you want to compare apples to apples, rambutans to rambutans, durians to durians, or BMW 7 series to BMW 7 series.

That is the first point I want to make because with a salary of RM750 a month back in the 1970s you lived reasonably well while if you earn RM750 today you are very, very poor and even the BR1M that the government pays you (although many are protesting it) is only as the Malays would say: *celah gigi saja*.

The second point is about Najib making a bigger mess than Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi a.k.a. Pak Lah and Pak Lah making a bigger mess than Dr Mahathir (which is why Dr Mahathir demanded Pak Lah's resignation and eventually got it).

Dr Mahathir is looking at just one aspect, and that is money. I, however, do not want to talk just about money even though money may be important. The fact that money can be lost and was lost is not in itself a problem. It actually reflects a bigger problem. And that bigger problem is the system sucks and that is why it is so easy to lose money and no one is held accountable in the end.

In short, the lost money is the result of something that is very wrong with the system. So, why talk just about the lost money? Instead, let us focus on what is wrong with the system that easily allows money to be lost. If the system were good it would be very difficult to lose money. It is because the system is bad that money can be easily lost.

Anyway, politicians are very clever at playing the game of mass distraction. They distract us with one issue, for example 1MDB, so that every man and his dog will focus on just that and we argue day in and day out until the cows come home about just 1MDB. But even if there was no 1MDB or if 1MDB proves a red herring in the end that still does not solve the country's problems.

Parliament now has absolute powers. Parliament can pass any law that it wants and even if those laws are bad and the Agong refuses to sign those laws they still automatically become laws.

In the past the Agong takes direction from the Conference of Rulers, which means nine State Rulers. These nine Rulers plus the Agong must unanimously agree on certain things and only when that consensus is reached can the Agong act on it — say, like turning Malaysia into an Islamic State.

When Parliament passes any draconian laws or laws that are bad for the country the Agong can refuse to sign those laws and can send them back to Parliament to be re-debated and amended. That is to prevent a dictator from taking over the country.

Parliament debates and argues those laws, which are then sent to the Senate. If the Senate is not happy with those laws it does not even bother to send them to the Agong. The Senate just sends it back to Parliament — for example the Islamic family law during Pak Lah's time, which Parliament approved but due to wide protests the Senate rejected it.

Unfortunately that was one of the rare occasions when the Senate listened to the rakyat and opposed Parliament. Most times the Senate is a rubber-stamp Senate.

The Parliamentarians themselves are not allowed to vote with their conscience. They need to vote according to what their party says. And when Parliamentarians vote against party lines, which has happened once or twice in the past (and BN Parliamentarians on top of that, too) he or she has to face disciplinary action and is either sacked or suspended from the party.

We might as well not have 222 Members of Parliament. All we need are 14 Members of Parliament (the other eight parties did not win any seats or else it would be 22). Yes, one MP from each party since they vote for their party and not for the rakyat or voters.

So you see, Malaysia is in a mess like Dr Mahathir says. Whether Najib made a bigger mess than Pak Lah and Pak Lah in turn made a bigger mess than Dr Mahathir is certainly a matter that can be debated. It all depends on whether you are just talking about money or more than that.

The judiciary went downhill in the 1980s-1990s. Detention without trial (not for Communist Terrorists but for dissidents and political activists) increased in the 1980s-1990s. The power of the Agong to not sign bad laws was removed in the 1980s-1990s. The independence of parliamentarians and senators to vote with their conscience eroded in the 1980s-1990s. Turning the Malaysian government into a business and a profit-making enterprise happened in the 1980s-1990s. Privatisation of strategic industries that should have remained in government hands because they should not be making money but instead should be fulfilling a national service happened in the 1980s-1990s. Money politics in Umno became the new party culture in the 1980s-1990s.

It was in the 1980s-1990s that the Prime Minister said Malaysians should not be given freedom of speech because Malaysians are not mature enough to understand freedom of speech.

It was in the 1980s-1990s that the Prime Minister said Malaysia needs detention without trial as a form of preventive detention because we need to detain people for thinking and even before they commit a crime.

It was in the 1980s-1990s that the Prime Minister elevated the status of the Sharia court to be at par with the common law court that now creates the ambiguity and confusion as to which court has the final say on matters related to Islam.

It was in the 1980s-1990s that Umno got involved in business so that it could amass billions and billions of Ringgit and own property and companies at the expense of the taxpayers and paid for by the taxpayers.

It was in the 1980s-1990s that Umno treated the government as an Umno-owned entity and if you work for the government then you work for Umno and the country's assets are considered Umno's property.

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