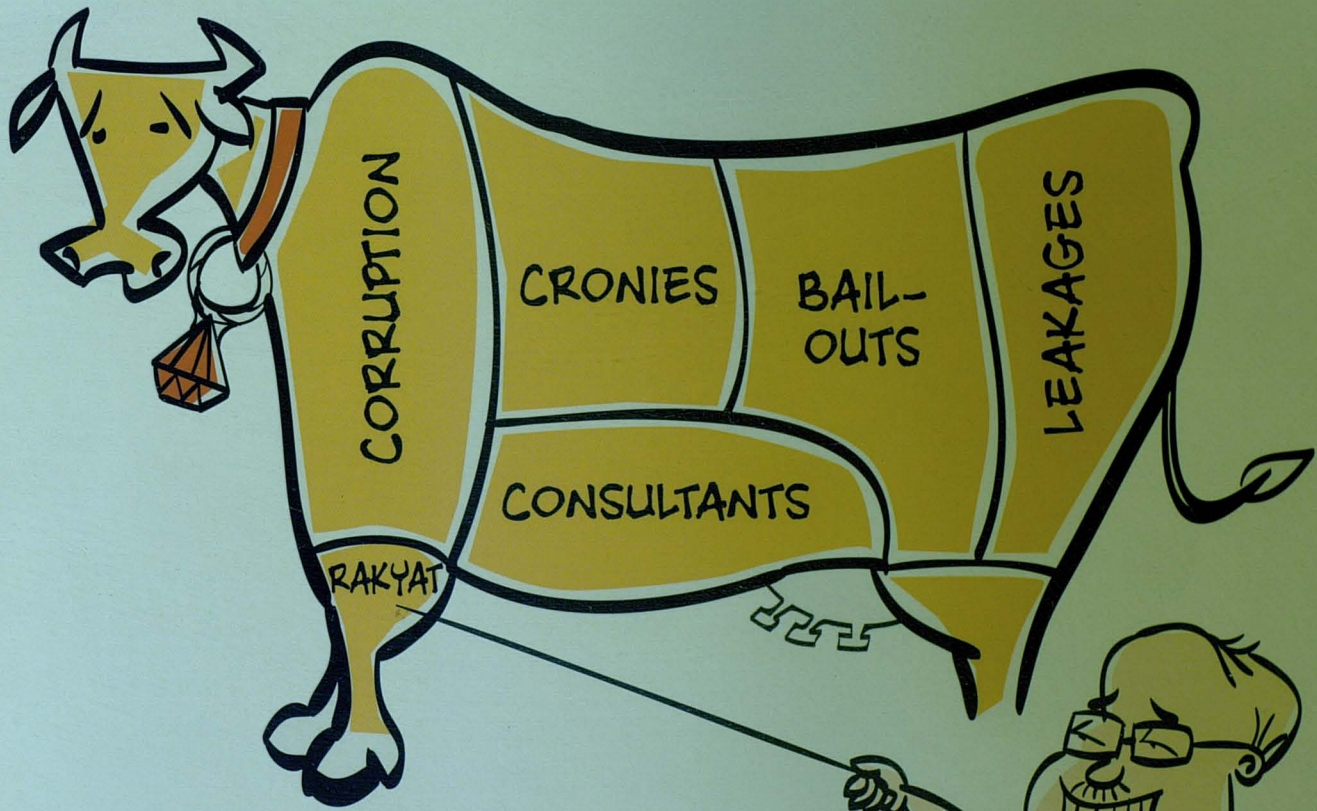


# UMNO-NOMICS

THE DARK SIDE OF THE BUDGET



Endorsed by  
**Nurul Izzah,**  
Member of Parliament  
for Lembah Pantai

Analysis by  
**TEH CHI-CHANG**

Illustrations by  
**JOHNNY ONG**

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## Endorsement

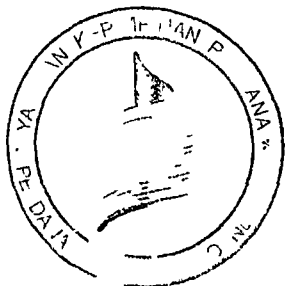
Insightful and highly readable, **UMNO-NOMICS: The Dark Side of the Budget** helps Malaysians understand not only the annual federal government budget but also its abuses, and the dangers hidden in off-budget items such as '**contingent liabilities**'.

The sad and shocking economic realities of Malaysia make for absorbing reading in this offering by Johnny Ong and Chi-Chang. We are deep in a labyrinth created and made increasingly treacherous by successive UMNO-BN federal governments. Mega-projects and patronising agencies obscure the astonishing 40% of households surviving on less than RM50 per day. The minotaur of 'Bankruptcy' is stalking not just our government but also heavily indebted, poorly-paid wage-earners.

Malaysia is in need of catharsis if we are to avoid our own Greek tragedy. Chi-Chang and Johnny soothe the process by deftly explaining and illustrating ways out of this morass. Pakatan Rakyat MPs such as myself who have been spotlighting the destructive nexus between politics and economics applaud this effort. Bravo! The Malaysian economy has never been so pithily covered.

**Nurul Izzah Anwar**

Member of Parliament for Lembah Pantai  
and Vice President of KEADILAN



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# Foreword

Let us be clear right from the beginning. This book is partisan. The authors Chi-Chang and Johnny Ong are not trying to be neutral. Their dislike of UMNO policies is evident, and the purpose of this book is to convince readers why Pakatan Rakyat is better.

Yet, the publication of this book must be welcomed because it sets a different tone for political differences. Too often in our country, partisan politics is associated with blind loyalty and the belief that “my party is always right, and your party is always wrong, no matter what.” I disagree with this rigid approach. Those who know me well are probably tired of hearing me say “Pakatan bukan malaikat dan UMNO bukan iblis” - Pakatan is not an angel and UMNO is not the devil. Big groupings are bound to have a mix of angels and devils side-by-side. We must acknowledge that when it comes to political parties, no one side has a monopoly on wisdom or the truth.

That is why I agreed to write this foreword, even though I do not fully agree with the authors. I, for one, like the economic vision of Prime Minister Najib Razak, especially the economic liberalisation spirit contained in the New Economic Model. What Prime Minister Najib wants to do is, to me, better than what Pakatan now proposes. The great failure of that vision thus far is in its implementation. There is a lot that UMNO and BN need to do to bring rhetoric to reality.

Even though our country is so divided along partisan lines, only very rarely do we ever discuss differences in policies. Many choose sides despite policies. Blind loyalty and absurd politicking still prevail. This trend is most unhealthy. We must move towards a society that makes partisan choices founded on well-argued, policy-based reasoning. This book is a brilliant step towards that aspiration as it explains rationally why the authors feel Pakatan is better than Barisan.

Pakatan supporters must read this book so that they have more cogent arguments for their allegiance beyond “because UMNO is wrong”. And those who support UMNO or BN must read it to understand why the other side is so upset with them.

If we can have more authors following the footsteps of Chi-Chang and Johnny – writing about complex socio-economic issues in such a simple, readable yet rational manner, and more importantly, arguing from different sides – the Malaysian political scene would surely become more dynamic.

**Wan Saiful Wan Jan**  
Chief Executive, Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs  
[www.IDEAS.org.my](http://www.IDEAS.org.my)

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## About this Book

*UMNO-NOMICS: The Dark Side of the Budget* is the sequel to my best-selling *The Budget: How the Government is Spending OUR Money*. That book, first published in 2009 and subsequently translated into Bahasa Malaysia and Chinese, was an introduction to the basic facts and issues surrounding the federal government Budget.

This book expands the horizons to include more details on policy choices and their implications. It compares and contrasts the economic policies and performances of UMNO/Barisan Nasional with Pakatan Rakyat which held five of thirteen state governments immediately after the March 2008 general elections.

It might have been titled *How the Government SHOULD be Spending OUR Money*. However, I chose to focus the title on UMNO to highlight that this one party alone controls 81% of the federal Budget<sup>1</sup>. All the other component parties of the Barisan Nasional put together have hardly any influence.

The title I ultimately chose also draws attention to the dark side of the policies and practices propagated by successive domineering UMNO federal governments. In the course of researching and writing this book, I found myself increasingly distressed by the wastage, misdirection, corruption and inefficiency of successive UMNO-dominated federal governments. Our people have hardly benefited from the country's rich resources, and our nation is on the brink of financial ruin.

It might be said that the Pakatan Rakyat state governments, particularly in Selangor and Penang, have delivered far more to ordinary Malaysians in the past four years than successive BN governments in the preceding 51 years. The achievements are even more astounding when you realise that their state Budgets are tiny compared to that of the federal government, and they have to work through state civil servants who are sometimes hostile.

The facts and analysis underlying my views are all set out here. Whether you eventually agree or disagree, I would consider this book successful if it stimulates thought and constructive discourse about the Budget that focuses on national advancement, sustainability and balance, not spending, goodies and handouts.

**Chi-Chang**  
June 2012



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## About the Illustrator

Graphic designer cum political cartoonist Johnny Ong draws to remind self-important leaders that they are not our political masters, but rather leaders whom we choose to entrust with authority for short periods of time between elections. Johnny is a graduate of the Malaysian Institute of Art and the school of hard knocks in the university of life. He was a winner in the 5<sup>th</sup> Lat Cartoon Competition in 1986, and has worked as a waiter, bartender, salesman, factory worker and forklift driver.

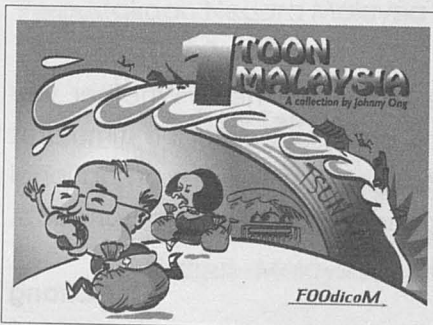
Seeing injustice and discrimination happening daily in his beloved country drove Johnny to fight for a better society through his sketches. He hopes to help young Malaysians realise the importance of politics in their lives. His only wish is to see a two-party system materialise in his lifetime so that his much-loved Malaysia will see proper checks and balances in order that government policies benefit the poor, the weak and the marginalised. Johnny can be contacted at [john05msia@gmail.com](mailto:john05msia@gmail.com). More of his cartoons are available at <http://www.facebook.com/johnny.ong1> and also in *Suara Keadilan*, where he is a regular contributor.

## About the Author

Teh Chi-Chang, 41, has been Executive Director of REFSA (Research for Social Advancement), an independent research institute dedicated to improving government policies, since April 2011. Prior to that, he spent 16 years in finance, including as a director of investment research contributing to top-rated teams covering utilities and media companies regionally and heading Malaysia country-research teams. In between, he served for a year as Economic Advisor to the Democratic Action Party (DAP) in a voluntary capacity.

Chi-Chang's tertiary qualifications include a First Class Honours Bachelor's degree from the University of Warwick, the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation and a University of Cambridge Master's degree. He is also a CELTA-qualified teacher. Chi-Chang hopes competition will foster better government in Malaysia, which will then allow him to focus on his real ambitions - to produce a definitive English language text on the art of tai-chi and play the guitar.

## Other books by Johnny and Chi-Chang



1 Toon  
Malaysia.  
Johnny  
Ong,  
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The Budget: How  
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# UMNO-NOMICS

## The Dark Side of the Budget

Analysis by **Teh Chi-Chang, CFA**

Illustrations by **Johnny Ong**



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