



LETTERS

- PM deserves credit
- Pak Lah shouldn't have given in to Dr M
- PM's reforms: Footprints in the sand?
- Playing money politics while 'Rome' burns
- Teachers' Deepavalli eve briefing unkind
- Where's the M'sian we want to show the world?
- Mat Rempit problem can be solved
- Put an end to 'cyber thefts'
- AirAsia, wake up and answer your phones!
- Oppandham/Social Contract

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- Malaysia's press freedom ranking on a free fall
- Syed Hamid ticks off those seeking early polls
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- Anwar defends his track record
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- Khairy: Call for ISA on me 'unwarranted'
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- Invite to Nobel laureate scrapped after 'protest from students'
- KL mayor under fire for Jalan Alor name change

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- Flawed logic and irrational action
- Obama for Putrajaya
- M'sia - champion of human rights abroad
- Right decision, wrong direction!
- I think therefore I perish
- Anwar's challenge: US policy
- Hope lies in the reformasi press to catalyse change
- The sighting of the 'iceberg'
- Culture reinvestigated
- Keeping up RPK's spirit

OPINIONS

- In defence of international justice

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Oppandham/Social Contract

Anushka Anastasia Solomon | Oct 22, 08 3:10pm

- inspired by *Salma, the Muslim rebel poet of Tamil nadu.*

it is not written on palm leaves, our *oppandham*/social contract grieves
 our tears ought to turn our gods to stone ought to burn our flesh to bone
 i ceased to write anonymously. when? i learned i had become a woman.
 i began my ascent. Tamil. descent. i learned to roll the red carpet out
 i nest among the alphabet of poets now.
 i write only the most mundane letters to the young poet in malaysia
 i say: *apa khabar?* How is the *dewan bandar?*
 so far the germans have not gouged my eyes out.
 so far my feet have not burned or my ankles turned
 so far so good. The servant girls can sit on the sofa
 so far the newspapers report the weather wrong
 so far my sore throat is not due to any poison on the horizon
 so far so good. The Indians are in the news. Some one changed the cloth on the pews in the Church of England.
 so far the Queen has not asked Wathayamoorthy to tea.
 so far we have no Evidence As to a She Devil poem not being authored by Carl Sandburg.
 so far no one has found Uthaya Kumar guilty of nothing
 so of course, our brothers are guilty of everything from a-z especially heresy to sodomy

according to the letter of the contract so far so good.
 i scour more than the pots and pans i read Rilke in English
 i sometimes languish in anguish and in English don't say that but i think about *allah*, what i have done *salah*, why god lives in a triangle
 i can neither enter nor leave. dare i suggest someone forgot to paint 'adore'
 i think about the birthday cake uncle working in city hall brought home
 i think about my deaf and mute cousin's sorrow. long ago. kuala lumpur.

salah! salah! salah! he cried. The cake had iced on it the wrong name.
 in his haste, that day uncle forgot to rub auspicious paste off the idols
 in little jaffna. he had had them write a false god's name instead.

i think about the oppandham among the poets born tomorrow
 i read between the lines on their forehead
 i fall asleep dreaming a hundred years from now when i am blown away.
 i know our oppandham left my estate and tongue to any Tom, Dick/Harry saying
 i am someone they know.
 it is not written on palm leaves, but i shall return to repossess my soul.

- Credit crunch - welfare for the rich
- Moving away from race-based politics
- Umno's exorcism
- The political animal
- In the heartland
- Rural women - invisible and isolated
- Race Relations Act will change little - critics
- Regulators cannot avert next crisis
- Little scope for Europe-Asia FTAs

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