

**PM entering 'Pak Lah' phase, says DAP analyst**  
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The reported dip in Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's approval rating signifies the reservoir of goodwill towards the premier has run dry and his popularity is on the decline, just as it was with his predecessor, says DAP analyst Liew Chin Tong.

In a report released by Merdeka Center for Opinion Research today, the pollster says the prime minister's support had fallen six points to 59 percent, the lowest in nearly two years.

"I think Najib is entering the Pak Lah phase. Things are recurring, like it was during the Pak Lah era," said Liew (left).

The people had great expectations of former prime minister Abdullah Badawi, or Pak Lah as he is popularly known, when he took over the reigns from Dr Mahathir Mohamad's 22 years of authoritarian rule.

The former premier had vowed to eradicate corruption, garnering him monumental support and a staggering approval rating of 91 percent when he first took office in 2004, according to the same pollster.

However, Abdullah's failure to deliver saw the BN coalition, which he led into the 2008 general election, lose its two-thirds majority in Parliament for the first time, and by September that year, his approval rating experienced a free fall, giving him a meagre 43 percent.

Liew, who is also MP for Bukit Bendera, said Najib's decline in popularity was a sign that his policies had failed.

"It is a clear signal that he has to do a U-turn, for whatever he is trying to do has not paid off," he said.

**'Najib's honeymoon period over'**

However, when it was pointed out that the premier's approval rating had skyrocketed when he first introduced his policies, Liew explained that it was due to low expectations following his predecessor's dismal performance and a hope for change.

"Najib had an extended honeymoon period, especially among the Malay voters, but all that is now waning off," he said.

When Najib first assumed office, his approval rating was even lower than that of Abdullah, at 45 percent. But the premier's break from Pak Lah's style of management saw his support climb steadily to an all time high of 72 percent.

However, since then, Najib has pushed through several reforms, including slashing subsidies, while the more controversial reforms such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has been put on hold.

The move has seen an increase in cost of living which, according to Merdeka Center, has chipped off at the premier's approval ratings.

Najib had on July 27 introduced a new Key National Results Area for the Government Transformation Programme, specifically aimed at reducing the cost of living - but today's ratings suggest it has done little to combat the spiralling cost of living - which is costing the prime minister his acceptance by the rakyat.