

**Pakatan casts net for new Merdeka Day theme**  
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After giving the government a week's deadline to change the Merdeka Day theme, Pakatan Rakyat has called on the public to send in suggestions for a new theme to replace the overtly partisan 'Janji ditepati' (Promises fulfilled).

"The theme celebrating Merdeka Day that has been made into a BN campaign theme is unacceptable to the rakyat.

"This is the first time Merdeka Day that is sacred to the people, have been violated by a party's agenda in an attempt to stay in power," said Pakatan leaders in a joint statement today.

PAS secretary general Mustafa Ali, PKR vice president Nurul Izzah Anwar and DAP organising secretary Teresa Kok in their statement reminded the government of their one week deadline for a new theme that would be suited to all rakyat.

While they respected the government's right to select the theme, they said the ruling party should be "smart to select a theme acceptable to all levels of society".

Said the trio, "The Umno information chief recently responded that the right of choosing the National Day celebration theme was the unquestioned right of the ruling government.

"It's obvious that they choose not to respect the views of the people."

They cited Sinar Harian's survey yesterday, where 86 percent of the respondents agreed that the National Day theme should be changed.

Public's suggestions sought

This year's Merdeka Day theme has caused an uproar as it is also the BN's campaign slogan 'Janji ditepati'.

Critics have slammed the ruling party of hijacking the independence day celebrations for its own political mileage as the 13th general election looms.

DAP has denounced both the logo and theme as a national 'laughingstock'.

Pakatan leaders meanwhile followed with a call for a more inclusive theme and has invited members of the public to submit their suggestions for the new theme to sekretariatpakatan@gmail.com by July 30.

It can also be addressed to Sekretariat Pakatan Rakyat, No. 17, Jalan 16/2, Seksyen 16, 16350 Petaling Jaya or faxed to 03-7958 1593.

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