

**Cut loose the fat, vicious wolf**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Mar 07, 2008**  
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When it was announced that the 12th general election would encounter its longest campaign period, the immediate reaction of everyone was it had something to do with the prime minister's favourite number.

MCPX

penang bn ceramah 060308 abdullah arrivedAfter all, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's official car number is 13 and Parliament was dissolved on Feb 13. Coincidentally, the number of campaign days was also 13.

Short of an official admission from Number One, we will never know the truth of this. But what we do know is besides the unprecedented length of campaigning period, this election will also go down as one with the most newcomers.

Promising change and an infusion of new blood the candidates picked were also said to be the one who have "performed" during the last tenure.

Though it's anyone's guess why Jerai MP Badruddin Amiruldin and Kinabatangan MP Bung Mokhtar Radin will make their returns. Perhaps, to entertain the August building with their pearls of wisdom once more.

In the same vein, nobody has also offered any legitimate explanation why one of Forbes magazine's top four philanthropists, outspoken lawyer Zaid Ibrahim, was dropped from its lineup.

Also dropped was Kelana Jaya MP Loh Seng Kok who asked why the contributions of Chinese towards the nation's Independence were played down in school history books.

The longer period may be to allow BN new candidates overcome some grassroots discontent and for the rakyat to know the newbies.

But things haven't worked all that well for the parties in power. Besides letting the people know more about its candidates, it has also given an opportunity for the opposition to hit the rakyat with an unprecedented number of ceramahs.

With enough holes in them (Barisan Nasional) to sink the Titanic, Abdullah, MCA chief Ong Ka Ting and MIC evergreen S Samy Vellu find themselves outnumbered in ceramahs and out-argued on issues such as Hindraf, religious freedom, the Klang Free Trade Zone debacle and charges of cronyism.

### **A threat or a promise**

As such it is little wonder that on the eve of polling day, Abdullah has to threaten or promise Chinese voters that if they abandon MCA, they would face a smaller or no voice in the cabinet. As it is many Chinese are already asking "Can MCA be any quieter in the cabinet?"

MCA and MIC also played their part in the 10 mainstream papers, 20 radio stations and

more than 30 over channels (Astro included) by pleading and reminding their races in their past achievements.

One mainstream writer had brilliantly captured the essence of voters' choice come tomorrow by likening the ruling government and the opposition to wolves.

Borrowing his insightful piece, I suppose we should also ask the question, "What do you do with an old, arrogant and overfed wolf which bites the hand that feeds it?"

Old because we are in the company of very few countries who have had the same party in government for 50 years. Illustrious company includes Zimbabwe, Singapore, Cuba, Vietnam, China, Sri Lanka and Burma (a popular choice of PJ Selatan MP Donald Lim).

### **Bigger scheme of things**

Anyway, neither Abdullah, Ong or Samy have yet to explain why they need two-thirds majority to form a government when all that is needed is only a simple one.

One can only guess in the bigger scheme of things, a strong victory for BN is not only for it to form a government but for Abdullah, Ong and Samy to convince their own parties why they are still needed. MCA and Umno elections are due this year.

Arrogant because the dominant party within the coalition has on more than one occasion whipped its partners for having a different stand on issues. Remember K Devamany who attempted to agree with some of Hindraf's claims. He was immediately told to apologise by Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak the next day.

zakaria deros mansion complete 161007 sideEveryone remembers the opening of Zakaria Mat Deros' palatial residence, which Selangor MB Khir Toyo and the Prime Minister's son-in-law attended. But he was but one of three local councilors who flouted the law.

The other two were Mazlynoor Abdul Latiff and Faizal Abdullah. Mazlynoor has since been reinstated to the Klang Municipal Council following his resignation earlier.

Do we continue to feed our fat and vicious wolf for sentimental reasons? Or should we cut back on its food to remind it who's the boss?

Between the devil and the deep blue sea, the cool but unpredictable waters for the moment look less treacherous than the waiting fangs of the wolf at home.

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