

Pak Lah's days as PM are numbered
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Umno veteran Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah has written a letter to all 193 Umno division leaders urging them to call an extraordinary general meeting on May 11 in the wake of the party's unprecedented electoral setback. MCPX

ku li tengku razaleigh interview 241106 reluctant In a two-page letter dated March 12, Razaleigh asked the Umno leaders to invoke the party constitution to demand an EGM to discuss the results of the March 8 election, which saw the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition losing five key states.

Razaleigh said his suggestion for May 11 for the special party meeting was because it was the day Umno was founded in 1946.

The 70-year-old former finance minister who made a failed challenge against Prime Minister Abdullah Abdullah Badawi for Umno president in 2004, painted a dire picture for the ruling party.

"In the first general election in 1955, Umno controlled two-thirds of the seats in Parliament. Today, we are a minority voice in Parliament. At the federal level, Umno is no longer a strong political power. I nearly shed tears thinking about this scenario.

Razaleigh, who is the head of Umno Gua Musang division in Kelantan, said that in 2004, the party had 107 out of 219 parliament seats. Now however, the party controls 78 out of 222 seats.

'Umno will not rule again'

"Worse still, at the 12th general election, BN lost four states - Penang, the home state of our own party president (which has fallen into the hands of Chinese-based DAP), Kedah (which has fallen to PAS), Perak (which has fallen to DAP despite that the menteri besar is from PAS), and Selangor (which will be dominated by non-Malay DAP and non-Malays from PKR despite that the menteri besar is a Malay," he wrote appealing to fears of Umno leaders losing political control to the country's non-Malay minorities.

Razaleigh added that the party rank-and-file should not "point fingers at anyone" and absolve themselves for the debacle. According to him, the party should have not allowed the top leadership to make such a mistake.

"This is our collective responsibility, the responsibility of all Umno members and leaders from the branch and division levels to the Umno supreme council, this is not just the responsibility of a few top leaders only."

The EGM, he said, should examine the disastrous electoral performance of BN.

"We must find out why Chinese and Indian voters rejected MCA and MIC candidates. Why were incumbent Umno candidates defeated by PKR and PAS candidates? Otherwise at the next election, if we don't change our policies, culture and morale in BN and Umno - and change radically - BN and Umno will not rule again," he wrote in the letter.

"PKR-DAP-PAS will form the federal government, the PM may be from PKR and the DPM may be from the DAP. And should BN still remain intact, it would become an opposition party which is weak and disunited. Umno will not be able to represent the voice of Malays again."

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