

Pakatan's moment will come soon enough
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It's not just for the moral high ground that the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) should reject the defection option. It is also politically expedient at this political conjuncture. Why do I say this? First, I believe most PR supporters would balk at the idea, having after all rejected the BN for all its chicanery. MCPX

This alone should be enough reason for the PR not to choose such an option as it would lose faith with most of its supporters. Second, there has to be a 'ripe' moment for all things politic, which I explain further below.

Antares is persuasive enough that we now have signs of an obstructionist federal government that would try to deny the people's mandate for change. However, these attempts at political play are part and parcel of politics, especially in a democracy; we support our allies and do our damnest to defeat our opponents within the rules of the game.

However, if obstructionism became too overt and unduly unfair, the BN could end up shooting itself in the foot and turning the people even more definitively against it.

After March 8, with five state governments to deal with and 82 PR parliamentarians, I'm not sure that the BN's tactics, such as that of the tourism minister, could be deployed with impunity. She seems to be unwitting about the fact that Malaysia's main tourist belts and tourist attractions are in the five PR states. If she continues with her tactics she would rapidly lose her credibility if it's not already lost now.

When will it be politic for the PR to seize the ripe political moment? Antares is surely too dramatic too when he opines that the BN will drag us into 'irreversible ruin' and so he is anxious for the PR to strike the 'death blow' now. The fact is, the way things are progressing, the BN parties are already in the throes of a deadly decline and the internecine wars within the BN parties may deliver its own mortality earlier than we think.

If indeed, BN were to steadily self-destruct, the PR's strategic moment could come when there is a need to form a minority government sans defection. This could occur after a no-confidence vote on the BN, with Umno in a state of disarray some time after Parliament convenes on April 28. We may not need wait for the Umno fisticuffs to play themselves out in December but that could be another watermark for a PR strike.

In the eventuality of a no confidence vote, the BN, left with a rump coalition of less than 112 parliamentarians will become the opposition and the PR can form a government even with less than 112 MPs.

The self-defecting BN MPs could remain outside the government but they would be free to vote along with the PR on important bills. This will be much more honourable scenario for a would- be PR government and something at which the rakyat will not balk at.

Come what may, my sense is that the hour of reckoning for the BN will come sooner rather than later and there is really no rush to strike out wildly for now.

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