

Fuel price: Pakatan made no promise
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ITS: I refer to one particular reference to one specific statement made in the report: 'Pakatan would come into office after promising to lower oil prices'. This statement is factually wrong. The 'turun harga minyak' position was taken only by PKR and PAS. DAP did not embrace this position as a core election promise. In fact, I believe DAP's 2008 shadow budget seems to recommend the opposite, ie, that such subsidies be reduced to bring the national economy in line with global commodity supply and demand trends. Therefore, to claim the position is a Pakatan position is totally incorrect and grossly misleading. One would expect greater accuracy from Ong Kian Ming, even if not to the extent of academic rigor.

To describe a reduction of oil prices as a Pakatan promise can lead to skewed and incorrect perceptions about what the electorate can expect from their elected representatives. Pakatan will break ranks on certain issues, which is healthy for a maturing democracy, and I would expect many, if not all, DAP representatives to vote against any measure to reduce the retail price of oil.

Furthermore, if Pakatan were to form the Federal government and pursue a policy of reducing oil prices, then in order to facilitate the DAP's change in policy, I think at the very least it would be necessary for Tony Pua - who was the chief architect of the DAP's 2008 shadow budget - to resign as economic advisor to his party's secretary-general, for he would probably be considered a 'lame duck' economic advisor.

On Hassan on race-relations, Islamic state and pigs in S'gor

CT: He says an Islamic state is all about : 'Helping the poor and the downtrodden [...] being judicious, transparent, not corrupted [...] doing good things, taking care of your family, not going overboard in actions'.

I believe then all Hindus, Buddhists, Taoists, Christians, etc can also lay claim to these values as these values are universal and not just Islam's. Why then the need for an Islamic state philosophy - just do the job as outlined and the country and the rakyat will be ever so grateful. Too much preaching and not enough doing (that's why Umno/BN fell).

Om Prakash: The current state administrators are practicing transparency and fairness irrespective of race and religion and that's how it should be if the state and country is to achieve peace and prosperity. Hassan should not just champion one's own beliefs at the expense of others. The rakyat don't need any political preachers anymore. Instead they should just work as expected by the rakyat.

On Gov't to delay projects amid rising costs

Joe Fernandez: With regards to the projects in the opposition alliance-ruled states, BN is either slowing them down or scrapping them because they personally cannot benefit. That's the way the so-called development projects are planned. So they have decided to shift the funds to states they rule, so that they can personally continue to benefit.

I am happy the second Penang Bridge was scrapped. How many bridges do you need?

Better to work on a tunnel, improving the ferry service, improving access by the present bridge and improving public transportation. It was because of the bridge that Gerakan joined the BN after the May 13 riots.

It makes 'political sense' to scrap projects which don't benefit you personally but instead benefit your political opponents, not that I agree with such strategies and tactics. The economic policies of the Opposition Alliance-ruled states will place greater emphasis on organic growth and the role of the private sector.

Overall, there should be a moderation in growth in selected sectors so that prices, especially imported inflation, will go down. Prices going down will benefit many people, just as prices going up benefitted many other people.

On Sultans' political sword cuts both ways

R Rama Chandran: There are constitutional provisions for sultans and the King who must act as a last resort only as advisors when there are genuine problems. Such advice or counseling should be seen as fair and proper in the interests of the nation and not for their personal preference or interests. The sultans and the King are a good check and balance mechanism.

On Why bother waking up at 3am to study?

Sukyakee: My heart goes out to you, 'Disappointed'. But I would like to encourage you not to give up. Contact Macee. American universities are often generous with scholarships/financial aid. I have experienced it myself and so have many others. With your outstanding results and extra-curricular activities track record, I believe you stand a good chance.

My: 'Disappointed Student', welcome aboard Pakatan Rakyat! I was a very strong supporter of BN until a few years ago mainly due to the fact that I have all along been fed with spinned news by the mainstream media.

After seeing the injustices being perpetrated by the BN government against non-Malay students year in and year out when the varsity entrance and scholarship after results were announced, I have started to question myself why should I keep on supporting BN and their so-called coalition partners MCA, Gerakan and MIC who are supposedly in the coalition to fight for their respective race's rights and interests? MCA and Gerakan have been asking us, the Chinese, to give them our votes so that they, being in the governing coalition could have our voice heard in the cabinet and Parliament in order to protect our rights and interests.

If that was what they really did in the cabinet and Parliament, then such injustices as faced by 'Disappointed Student' and so many other non-Malay students would not be recurring year in and year out. So, MCA and Gerakan what now do you want from us Chinese voters? Give you more votes so that you can have more seats combined than those obtained by Umno so that your voice can be heard by Umno? Is this what you want? My advice to you MCA and Gerakan 'leaders' is don't even bother to ask us for our votes. You have all this while betrayed us and let us down for far too long.

On 'Toothless tiger' Suhakam turns malicious

Truly Malaysian: Well, it looks as if Suhakam had come to the rescue of the various authorities instead of the human rights victim. Good works, guys. The rescued must have given the a pat on the these guys' shoulder and recommended that they shall stay on for another two terms in appreciation of this admirable performance. The investigation done by the panel of 'efficient' Suhakam investigators was fast and furious. But in their haste for the 'rescue', they made a mistake - they missed visiting Uthayakumar. Although that is quite excusable as their target for rescue were the authorities facing some strong criticisms from the society, they should not have forgotten the very role of the organisation. That was a grave mistake that undermined the credibility of Suhakam and also that of their own. It is a pity that Suhakam had to come to the wrong sort of rescue!

On Penang CM ready to take rap for taking in 'BN virus'

Concerned Citizen: Keng Yaik is not a good politician - just like the PM. They are childish. The GE12 is over and now we have to get on with the act of governing the state in the best manner. Therefore the best man gets chosen irrespective of the party he comes from. The rakyat will gauge his performance and regularly send feedback through the alternative media. Keng Yaik, you have retired from polictics therefore don't go around politicking the issue.

GC Tham: I believe, as many Malaysian do, that Lim Guan Eng is moving along the right direction. Should not it be the case that one should employ the most capable people to serve regardless of political affiliation? Let stop all the fuss and let give Kah Choon and Guan Eng a chance to prove themselves.

Dr Rajendran Muthuveloo: Sad to say that, I feel Lim Guan Eng will not make a good CM of Penang. He is being foolish in offering jobs to an opposition party. I strongly feel that Lim Guan Eng should give all the available opportunities to capable Pakatan Rakyat members so that by next election, the current leaders will be matured and experienced in running the state.

If Lim Guan Eng is not careful, in years to come, we all will be victimised by PKR instead of Umno. I have registered an official letter and e-mail to Lim Guan Eng regarding this matter. Unfortunately, I have not received any feedback.

On Sabahans should not bow to anyone

Nooraza Othman: West/Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia states of Sabah and Sarawak on Borneo island, are being colonised especially by Muslim settlers of Indonesian Javanese, the Philippines Mindanaos and Bangladesh and Pakistani origin who have been given Malaysian citizenship (IC) so easily and the 'Malay/Bumputera/Indigenous' identity, in possible exchange for votes and support for the fascist ruling party.

'Indigenous' identity used to be based on the (diverse) ethnicity in Malaysia but now has been manipulated to be increasingly based absolutely on (Islamic) religion. An increasing number of these settlers might also be fanatical Muslims who are organising Islamist terrorism in order to build an Al-Qaeda/Taliban style Islamic nation-state here.

With the help of Arabic money and guns; many smuggled through Borneo sea and the vast

jungle; and through massively corrupting the enforcement officers and politicians. Please look at the scary website by the Al-Qaeda/Taliban style Malaysian-based organisation called Al-Fakir Jundi Ummah.

On Funds for SEDCs in Pakatan states via Mara

Tham: I'm very sad to learn about this funds disbursement an mentioned by Noh Omar. It is like those living in the opposition controlled states are not Malaysians. I, for one, would very much like to pay my income taxes to the authorities of the state I live in rather than to the federal government-controlled IRD.

In view of such a scenario, I will now fully support the Anwar Ibrahim-led opposition to take over the government. Practice the Penang's non-discriminatory criteria of governance. I am extremely sad with the federal government.

Joe Fernandez: Umno is obviously incapable of change and should be thrown out lock, stock and barrel from the federal government. They still haven't learnt a lesson from the last general election and continue to be stubborn. For what? Maybe they have a death wish.

On Molest case: 'Datuk Seri' gives statement to police

Retired Soldier: Just because he is a BN MP and a former minister, should the authorities hide his identity? All must be treated equally whether he is a VIP or common man. I am sure if it happens to a Pakatan person, his name would be in the headlines of the BN controlled media. Remember what happened to our beloved Pakatan team after the function on April 14? Anyway, since it is the AG who decides whether or not there is a case to answer, we all probably know that the dirt would be swept under the carpet by the broom which was presented by Khir.

On Time to end National Service

Anonymous: It is a common trend in Malaysia where many of the children of political leaders follow the footsteps of their parents to become politicians and leaders. This is true on both sides of the Malaysian political divide. Leading from there, it would not be too farfetched to say that the children of politicians are more likely to be future leaders of the country compared to the offspring of non-politicos. And as they are more likely to be future leaders, it seems that it would only be logical that the children/grandchildren of politicians (read: MPs, state assembly persons, senators and ministers) be given special preference to be included in the National Service programme. In fact, it should be made compulsory for this group.

This would ensure that these future-leaders of the country are given training in leadership skills, racial harmony and all the other aims of the National Service programme. The benefits of such a move would be plenty. Hopefully, even more care will be given to the running of NS camps since the children of important parents are in them The National Service Department should give this serious thought.

On Second bridge: 7-member body set up

One Bridge Is Enough: I am of the opinion that second bridge for Penang is not necessary. Traffic congestion in Penang Island will not be solved by having another bridge. So, it is important for the Penang government to re-invent its public transportation system which covers both the island and mainland. At the same time, shift the attention for development to the mainland. Over time, as the facilities on the mainland Penang become more complete, more Penangites will be attracted to stay on the mainland and thereby reduce traffic congestion on the island. A second bridge will make traffic congestion in Penang Island even worse.

HWN: My view is quite simple on the matter. Firstly, I am sure the present BN government has lots of reasons and motives, whether justifiable or not, to stall the second bridge project. But that should not deter the Penang state government. The latter should look into the possibility of undertaking the project on its own, if it makes economic sense. Looking at the numbers now and the projected numbers, I believe the project looks viable especially if concerted efforts are focused on design and operational details. A simple bridge that serves the purpose coupled with a strong management team would, I am very confident, put costs at bay.

The Penang state government should, if I may suggest, commission a reputable international investment banker to study the viability. The study will then allow the state government to decide on a two-pronged action plan:

- a) build, operate and fund the project on its own with the help of the international investment banker sourcing the necessary type of funding OR
- b) privatise the second bridge via an open tender if funding of that size is not available to a state government.

There will be a lot of spin-off from this development, especially those that are commercial in nature. There is no reason why the state government cannot get involved in some of these commercial developments if it is a state project. There are many possibilities, options, and potentials arising from undertaking this project. It is a mammoth task but I am sure there is enough talent available locally to manage this project. All is not lost! .