

**Umno 'silent majority' must rise up**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Oct 8, 2008**  
**Derek Law**

Once again, Malaysian politics is at a crossroads. Pak Lah is expected to announce that he will not seek re-election as Umno president and hand over his post to Najib.

This has resulted in many aspiring candidates ready to offer themselves for the post of Umno No 2 and some offering themselves for the Umno No. 1. In addition, there will also be numerous candidates offering themselves for various other positions in the party

Umno delegates will be spoilt for choice on who to nominate/vote for in the upcoming party elections.

It is also expected that many candidates fighting for positions in Umno will play the 'race card' in order to win votes and this will inadvertently spill over and lead to increased racial tensions in society.

The results of the 12th general election clearly showed that the rakyat, including the Malays, have rejected racial politics. This was reaffirmed by Anwar Ibrahim's convincing victory in Permatang Pauh, despite the propaganda of BN that Anwar was 'selling out' the Malays.

Then the Ahmad Ismail saga also showed that there was a difference between the sentiments of the so-called Umno grassroots leaders and the sentiments of the ordinary Malays.

The various Umno branch leaders in Penang may believe and support what Ahmad Ismail said but the truth is that most Malays (many of whom might be Umno members) do not believe or support what Ahmad Ismail said. Else, Arif Shah would not have lost n Permatang Pauh.

Unfortunately, most of these Malays form the 'silent majority'; they are not interested in active politics but will not hesitate to send a clear message through the ballot box.

The 'silent majority' in Umno must now rise up to the occasion to send a clear message to the Umno leadership during the coming crucial Umno elections.

Umno members must choose their leaders wisely, starting from the branch level. Umno members must choose leaders who are intelligent and understand the modern dynamics of the current economic and financial systems.

Umno members must choose leaders who are able to champion the Malay cause without trampling on the rights of the other citizens of Malaysia. Umno members must choose leaders who are able to lead the whole country, not just the Malays, but all Malaysians.

Umno leaders must be proactive and reform their mindset to cope with the challenges of the 21st century and not be stuck with the 'Malayan Union' mindset.

However, Umno members must not forget the past misdeeds of their leaders and be too forgiving. Politicians must not only be clean but must be seen to be clean. Any politician

with a tainted past should not be given a second chance to make a comeback.

Umno and Malaysia needs leaders who are clean, able and wiling to serve the community and country at large.

So, to all the Umno members, stand up and be counted and choose wisely.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/90897>