

**'Umno must steer government policies'**  
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**Athi Veerangan**

Umno vice-president Mohd Ali Rustam once again reiterated that the party must take control of the government to ensure Umno policies, especially the New Economic Policy (NEP), are being implemented effectively at all levels across the nation.

Mohd Ali said currently many Umno approved policies and plans could not be implemented with desired results due to lack of conviction at the federal government level.

He said the current political landscape in which the government acting freely from the party control does not augur well for Umno and the Barisan Nasional.

"The people voted for the party to form the government, not the other way around.

"So it's only proper for the party to control the government to implement policies, action plans and reforms desired by the masses.

"Otherwise Umno and BN would face serious political repercussions in the next general election," he warned when officiating the 6th annual delegates' conference of the Koperasi Kontraktor Melayu Malaysia Berhad (KKMMB) in Penang yesterday.

This is not the first time the Malacca Chief Minister has expressed his views on the matter in this manner.

Previously in an interview with Malaysiakini in October, he similarly said that Umno must dictate government policy in order for the party to regain lost support.

He had added that grassroots members were disappointed that a lot of their suggestions and wishes have not been fulfilled by the party. As such, many felt they cannot influence government policy, he had said then.

### **Malays still lagging**

Speaking at the KKMMB conference yesterday, Mohd Ali cited the problems in implementing the NEP as an example.

He said that while the NEP action plans were noble and were to benefit all Malaysians, things had gone wrong at management and implementation level due to government's lethargy.

"Thus, NEP objectives to eliminate economic disparities among various communities in the country could not be achieved.

"Once the party controls the government, Umno then can firmly implement all policies and action plans for benefit of all, especially the Malays," Mohd Ali explained to journalists later.

He also lamented that many Umno-led federal government policies, which have been agreed upon and accepted by all, faced difficulties in implementation due to lack of dedication and determination.

He said that if the government was firm and unyielding, Malaysians would not be still making a hue and cry about NEP and other policies.

The Umno deputy president hopeful also said non-Malays were understandably offended when Umno

leaders continued to harp on the NEP.

The NEP was introduced in 1970, to assist the Malays to secure a 30 percent share of the country's wealth across the board.

"Truth is the NEP has yet to achieve its goals," he said, pointing out that Malays still lagged behind others in professional jobs, business and property ownership.

He said non-Malays were unhappy when Umno stressed their desire to help the Malays, while Malays were upset that the government assistance failed to reach them.

"Something has to be done for NEP to benefit all," he said, adding that changing the current landscape to party-control-government system would be the right solution.

### **Single supply network**

Mohd Ali also called on Malay contractors' cooperatives and associations to form a construction material supply network to forge close working ties with government agencies to assist their industrial ventures.

The government, he said, could assist the contractors by providing professional guidance and auditing system to improve their management and work quality.

"Currently many contractors could not complete their construction works due to financial difficulties and rising cost.

"I believe a government-assisted single supply network can help them," said Mohd Ali.

Mohd Ali is one of three candidates vying for the Umno deputy presidency. He has received enough nominations to contest, ahead of Umno information chief Muhammad Mohd Taib but behind Umno vice-president Muhyiddin Yassin.

By convention the Umno deputy president also assumes the position of deputy prime minister.

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