

**Umno, BN seeks to make comeback in KL**  
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The presence of Federal Territories (FT) and Urban Well-being Minister Senator Raja Nong Chik and former federal territories minister Zulhasnan Rafique first time together on a political stage recently has given Umno FT a shot in the arm.

Raja Nong Chik, who is FT Umno division deputy chairman, boosted FT Umno members' confidence when he opened a retreat organised by Umno Setiawangsa division, which is headed by Zulhasnan.

Their presence together has given a new ray of hope to FT Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN) as they understand the political struggle in the capital, according to political observers.

Zulhasnan, 55, who was also former FT Umno and BN chairmen for three years, is a lone BN member of parliament in Kuala Lumpur besides that of Putrajaya and Labuan.

UMNO lost the Lembah Pantai and Titiwangsa parliamentary seats while the MCA failed to defend the Wangsa Maju and Bandar Tun Razak seats and Gerakan went down in Batu and Segambut.

Since then the BN was thrown into a quagmire and Zulhasnan was not reappointed as cabinet minister while Raja Nong Chik, who is Lembah Pantai Umno division chief joined the cabinet.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin was appointed FT Umno liaison committee chairman to strike a political balance and restore BN's strength in the FT in preparation for the 13th general election.

In FT Umno, stalwarts like Zulhasnan, Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, Suleiman Mohamad and off late Raja Nong Chik figured prominently. Each of them command strong support among Umno members.

Cordial relations

Zulhasnan was the only FT Umno leader elected as an Umno Supreme Council member while Raja Nong Chik was appointed as a Supreme Council member by Umno president Najib Abdul Razak.

Tengku Adnan, who is Putrajaya Umno division chief, was reappointed as Umno secretary-general.

Two years after BN's debacle in the 12th general election, FT Umno is said to have got back on its feet.

"I know Zulhasnan since I was in school and I always went to his house in Petaling Jaya then. We know each other for a long time. He is like my younger brother," said Raja Nong Chik, 56, when opening the retreat entitled "Empowering Politics" in Janda Baik near here recently.

Raja Nong Chik praised Zulhasnan for his untiring efforts in formulating strategies and organising programmes to restore the people's confidence and resolve their problems.

Speaking off-the-cuff, Raja Nong Chik spoke on Zulhasnan's leadership and the future of Umno and the BN in Kuala Lumpur.

Political observers feel that their cordial relations, moderation and openness signified a clear indication of Umno's revival in the FT as desired by Najib.

Under the Muhyiddin's tutelage and with the partnership of Raja Nong Chik and Zulhasnan, FT Umno and BN could be transformed, according to observers.

The retreat, which was attended by 250 Umno members, was an initiative to empower the party at the divisional and national levels besides getting Umno closer to the people.

"As Umno Lembah Pantai chief, I wish to learn from Zulhasnan on how to formulate election machinery strategies. Although no longer a minister, he is still audacious in strengthening Setiawangsa Umno," said Raja Nong Chik.

Zulhasnan said Setiawangsa Umno would give full support to Raja Nong Chik as a cabinet minister and FT Umno liaison committee deputy chairman.

"The retreat is not for personal gratification. We have to make painstaking planning if want to succeed. This programme is a follow-up to the national Umno programme for division chiefs in Janda Baik last year. In addition, this is a way of becoming the people's champion," said Zulhasnan.

Preparing for GE13

He said the retreat would be a good platform to hear the grouses of Umno members at the grassroots level.

"With the change of the Kuala Lumpur political landscape after the 12th general election, FT Umno and BN must strengthen their machineries to wrest the seats from the opposition by winning the hearts of urban dwellers," he added.

Commending on the effort, People's Progressive Party (PPP) FT chairman A Chandrakumanan said he hoped under Muhyiddin's leadership and Raja Nong Chik and Zulhasnan Rafique's partnership, the BN would be able to wrest FT state and parliamentary seats from the opposition.

Chandrakumanan said more programmes had to be organised to get the BN closer to the people by going down to the grassroots as initiated by Zulhasnan in 1999 when he was Wangsa Maju Member of Parliament.

He said one of the immediate measures which should be taken by the FT BN was to register new voters as the Election Commission deduced that the highest percentage of unregistered voters came from the FT.

Putrajaya accounted for the highest number of unregistered voters at 50.5 percent followed by Labuan (35.3 percent) and Kuala Lumpur (33.7 percent).

