

Reject The Return To 'Mahathirism'
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Dr. Mahathir's recent statements that the 'Chinese are the kingmakers' in GE13 and that 'GE13 will be about race' shows that he and the BN are increasingly afraid that a majority of the 3 million newly registered voters will cast a decisive vote against the BN and end 55 years of cronyism, corruption and abuse of power under the BN.

Increasingly, we are seeing a new generation of Malaysians who are rising up to reject the old style politics of the Mahathir era. We saw this in the Reformasi movement in 1998. We saw this in the GE 2008 political tsunami which swept away the BN governments in the states of Kedah, Penang, Perak and Selangor as well as 2/3rds control of the parliament.

We saw this in the first Bersih public rally on the 10th of November, 2007. We saw this in Bersih 2.0 on the 9th of July, 2011. And we saw this most recently on the 28th of April 2012 when hundreds of thousands of Malaysians of all races, backgrounds and age groups flooded the streets around Dataran Merdeka to demand for free and fair elections.

The success of the Bersih 3.0 rally coupled with the disgraceful acts of police brutality on the participants has shaken Prime Minister Najib Razak's confidence in calling for an election before July despite his supposed confidence that the BN would win in all 13 states and in the Federal Territories.

This historic demonstration has also no doubt caused Dr. Mahathir some discomfort in fearing that the BN would lose control of Putrajaya in the next general election. This would explain his recent attempts at trying to revive the old style divide and conquer politics of 'Mahathirism' in evoking old, tired and irrelevant images of racial conflict while the political reality is that all Malaysians - young and old; male and female; Malays, Chinese, Indians, Ibans and Kadazans; Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Sikhs – are uniting on various fronts and for various causes – for free and fair elections, against corruption, to promote public safety, to protect and safeguard the environment.

There are almost three million newly registered voters on the electoral roll since the 2008 general elections. Many of these voters have been motivated to register because of the possibility of political change in the next general election. They comprise almost a quarter of the 13 million voters in the current electoral roll. Approximately 60% of these voters are below the age of 60.

If 60% of these newly registered voters cast a vote against the BN government, Pakatan Rakyat would win as many as 100 parliament seats, assuming that 2008 voting patterns prevail. If 65% of these newly registered voters cast a vote against the BN government, PR would win as many as 110 seats, just 2 short of an overall majority. If 70% of these voters cast a vote against the BN, it would deliver 123 parliament seats to PR, enough to form a new government in Putrajaya.

This is the nightmare scenario for Dr. Mahathir and the BN – that the newly-registered and newly-mobilized voters will swing their support towards Pakatan Rakyat because they want to

end 55 years of corruption, cronyism and abuse of power under the BN.

The role of these newly-registered in the next general election is even more significant because of presence of the many phantom voters which have been put on the electoral roll in what is expected to be the dirtiest elections in Malaysian history.

I call upon these three million voters to lead the charge on behalf of all Malaysians to cast their vote for a free and fair election, to cast a vote against the old divide-and-rule politics of 'Mahathirism', to cast a vote for change and for a brighter future in and for Malaysia, and to end 55 years of cronyism, corruption and abuse of power under the BN.

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