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## Begin process of restoring BN now, says Razaleigh

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The longest serving member of parliament, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, said the Barisan Nasional leadership must act immediately to begin the process of restoring the coalition.

The veteran BN and Umno politician, who continued his 39-year dominance of the Gua Musang parliamentary seat in Kelantan, said it was a historic crisis which must be faced without further denial.

"The honesty with which we interpret this result, and the decisiveness with which we act on it, will determine whether we still have a future with the people," he said in a statement issued here yesterday.

Tengku Razaleigh, who is also Gua Musang Umno division chief, retained his seat when he defeated Pas candidate Zulkefli Mohamed with a 4,394-vote majority. But the Islamist party continued to rule Kelantan after its fourth convincing victory since 1990.

"This is not just a blow to BN and to Umno but to the nation as a whole. We now face a period of uncertainty such as we have never experienced before. BN and Umno's legitimacy and strength have been the bedrock of national unity and of Malaysia's successful development since independence. All this is now in question."

In Seremban, BN's newly re-elected MP for Jelebu, Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim, said the coalition must pay heed to the voice of the people.

Rais, who defeated Norman Ipin of Pas with a 11,610-vote majority, said the BN leadership must make the relevant changes to ensure more effective leaders were appointed.

"We must not simply waste time talking and harping on rhetoric ... we must ensure we take action to meet the needs of the people. Our actions must reach everyone, especially those in the grassroots. We must always listen to the voice of the people."

He said BN's poor showing was due to the sentiments of the people, coupled with their dissatisfaction over the rising prices of goods and fuel.

"The voters were also upset with other issues and I urge the leadership to take notice of these.

"The Umno supreme council must do its homework soon to find the root causes of these problems and weed them out before it is too late."