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Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	22/05/2012

COMMENT

# A lot more work for Kedah BN

NST - 22/5/2012

**GOOD VIBES:** The coalition has a fighting chance

**J**ANGAN *cantas mencantas*. He may sound like a broken record, but Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad made no bones about his fears that back-stabbing, if left unchecked would hamper Barisan Nasional's chances in the next general election, if not destroy them.

An equally distressing syndrome among some in the political fraternity is best described by the Kedah Malay colloquial, *kalau aku tak dapat, hang jangan boleh*, which literally means "if I don't get it, (somehow I will make sure) you will also not get it".

Back-stabbing and sabotage, which may come in many forms, were some of the major factors which caused Barisan Nasional to suffer its worst-ever election results in 2008.

✦ Closer to home, if ever there was a time for Barisan Nasional in Kedah to reclaim the state, it is now.

It is, however, ironically not so much that Kedah BN has done a lot, since it is public knowledge that the BN coalition took a long time to recover from its denial mode after losing the state, but because the Pas-led Kedah Pakatan Rakyat government has failed on most fronts.

For one, it has done very little to churn out new economic activities and opportunities.

Hijacking or re-branding ideas mooted by the former BN state government does not count. Even then, the Pakatan Rakyat state government is facing an uphill task implementing them.

No new affordable housing is another sore point with the people (read: voters especially among the low-income group).

Issues affecting religious schools and teachers, which is under state jurisdiction, such as better perks have also yet to be fully resolved.

The people (read: voters) too have a bone to pick with the Pas-led state government on issues affecting the quality of their lives.

Potable water has yet to reach all homes especially in the villages; clogged drains and waterways are still a major problem and this was manifested in the major floods in

2010, the worst in Kedah in recent years; and uncollected household garbage is among a host of other issues.

Politically, the Kedah Pakatan Rakyat is also on shaky ground with distrust prevailing among those who inhabit the corridors of power at Wisma Darulaman, the seat of the state government.

The attempted coup by Datuk Phahrolrazi Zawawi and Dr Ismail Salleh, Kedah Pas deputy commissioners I and II respectively in March speaks volumes of a leadership crisis in the Pakatan Rakyat state government led by Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak.

In short, the Kedah Pakatan Rakyat government will have a tough time convincing the people that they deserve to stay in power after the next general election.

Back to the issue at hand, Kedah



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Former prime minister **Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad** addressing Kedah Umno leaders last weekend. Pic by Lim Poh Chin

BN, led by Umno, can reclaim the state but it must not just win it back because the Pakatan Rakyat state government is weak and in tatters as was the case when the opposition took over Kedah in 2008.

The 2008 election result was a very bitter pill to swallow for Kedah BN, thus the prolonged state of denial.

To quote former Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, who also shared Dr Mahathir's concerns when he warned that BN might lose Kedah, Penang, Perak and Selangor, Kedah BN must inject new blood that should also come with new leadership style.

He also said that it was up to Umno to lead the way to introduce dynamic and fresh faces to challenge Pakatan Rakyat.

Kedah BN (read: Umno as the leader) must help Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to identify the winnable candidates.

Division leaders, especially those who have been fielded but failed and even incumbents who had "failed" the people (read: their supporters and voters) and the party leadership — and they know who they are — should be magnanimous. They should make way.

Do it for the party, for the people and for their own good too!

And to those not selected, they and their supporters could prove they are true party members in the next general election, regarded as the mother of all general elections, by heeding Dr Mahathir's advice, *jangan pantas mencantas*. (Don't back-stab).

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