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Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	11 AUGUST 2016

The name 'Pribumi' seems so out of touch with the masses

NST – 11/8/2016

DISAPPOINTMENT: How can Dr M's party 'fight for all' if the non-Bumis are not allowed to contest party polls?

HANA NAZ HARUN

IT is quite obvious that the biggest disappointment in former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's party was its name itself.

The name Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia or Pribumi seems so dated, irrelevant and out of touch with the masses. It doesn't have a ring to it. No snazz. No zing.

Malaysians took to social media to voice their opinions on this moniker, which they find amusing, to say the least.

One said: "Hold on, if there is Amanah, why should there be Bersatu? Soon will there be Jujur, Setia, Ikhlas, Ceria as well?"

I'd recommend that we lay off the adjectives when naming political parties, for next time.

On a more serious note, this party, whose registration was finalised on Tuesday by Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and several others, lacks inspiration and gusto.

While it pledges to move as an entity to fight for all Malaysians, its foundation — their members — must only be Malays or Bumiputeras.

The non-Bumiputeras are allowed to be part of Pribumi, but as mere associate members. They aren't allowed to vote or contest party elections.

This mirrors Pas' Dewan Himpunan Penyokong Pas, which allows non-Muslim members to join Pas, but has no member privileges to participate in party elections.

Pribumi is essentially, another Malay/Bumiputera-based party.

So what makes this party unique?

With its bright red-white hibiscus logo, it cries "inclusive, dynamic and progressive", promising to "fight for the rights of all".

But, how is it going to fight "for all" if not all facets of society are to be represented in its top leadership?

Pribumi's youngest pro-tem committee member, Syed Saddiq Abdul Rahman, however, begs to differ.

Many "fans" of Asia's top debater had chastised Syed Saddiq for going against his earlier ideals and him embracing the concept of "Bangsa Malaysia".

It already looks like part of the youth votes for Pribumi are going to the ditch.

After receiving much criticism for joining the party, the 24-year-old defended his decision and said the party was not "purely race-based", describing Pribumi as a "new-Pribumi reform-centric party".

Its remaining six pro-tem committee members are Umno has-beens who are upset with decisions made by Umno, the party they had once worked blood, sweat and tears for.

To political observers, it does not look like Pribumi's aims are to gain the urban votes, but are instead established to wrest away Umno strongholds.

This was one goal that opposition parties have yet to achieve, and Pribumi is trying to do just that.

However, Pribumi cannot do this alone and would need the support of its former enemies in the opposition coalition to form one "grand coalition", as they would call it.

This "grand coalition" is a disaster waiting to happen.

As it is, the opposition coalition made up of PKR, DAP and Parti Amanah Negara finds it hard to see eye to eye on several issues, with the latest being the snap polls that DAP-led Penang tried to call.

How sure are Dr Mahathir, Muhyiddin and the rest that they would be able to be on the same wavelength with the rest of the opposition parties?

Quick recap: Dr Mahathir, who is the Pribumi chairman, was the same person who put former opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and many other opposition figures behind bars, after all.

And come the general election, the biggest obstacle for this so-called grand coalition is to decide on seat allocations.

We all know how that turned out for PKR and DAP in the Sarawak election just three months ago.