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'HYPOCRITE'

'KIT SIANG IS AN OPPORTUNIST'

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He's only concerned if issues serve his purpose, says former DAP vice-chairman

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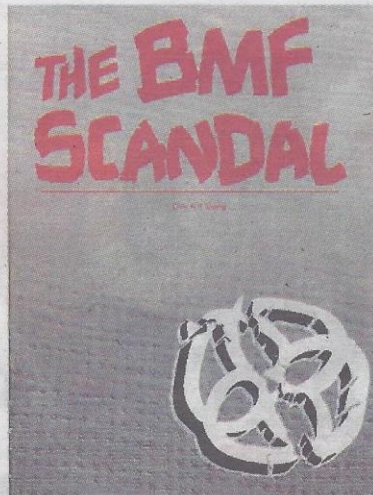
DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang has been labelled an "opportunist" and a "hypocrite" for his nonchalance over the controversial Bumiputra Malaysia Finance (BMF) scandal in the early 1980s.

This was despite the opposition leader then leading a crusade against then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad over the issue.

Lim's indifference was likely to appease a segment of Malay voters ahead of the 14th General Election (GE14), said former DAP vice-chairman Tunku Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim.

"This shows that Lim is an opportunist who will only take matters into his concerns if they serve his purpose, (and in the process), turn them into huge criminal issues. Otherwise, he will just sweep them under the carpet.

"The issue will remain the same. Only his reaction will be different,"



Lim Kit Siang's book titled 'The BMF Scandal' published in 1983.

Tunku Abdul Aziz said yesterday.

As of now, Tunku Abdul Aziz said Lim would have to downplay his response to the BMF controversy to establish a working relationship with Dr Mahathir and subsequently, hope to secure a certain deposit from a Malay vote base.

"If he upsets Dr Mahathir (by raising the BMF scandal), the already fragile relationship between them will simply disintegrate."

Tunku Abdul Aziz said such opportunistic traits were synonymous with Lim.

"I have seen such traits in him. That is how he treats PKR and Pas. He is just using them for DAP's purpose. I had once asked him person-

ally, are we (DAP) taking (former opposition leader Datuk Seri) Anwar (Ibrahim) and Pas seriously? Lim could not give me a straight answer."

It was reported last week that the United States Central Intelligence Agency had linked Dr Mahathir's administration to the BMF scandal between 1979 and 1983 that had cost the country nearly US\$1 billion (RM3.57 billion) in two botched loan deals. The scandal also involved the murder of a Bank Bumiputra auditor.

In response to the issue, Lim had published two books on BMF.

The first was published in 1983 titled *The BMF Scandal* and the second was in 1986, titled *BMF: The Scandal of Scandals*.

So far, Mahathir has denied his involvement in the scandal, while Lim was reportedly to have said that the CIA findings "did not reveal anything new".

Lim's disposition had also courted criticisms from other former DAP leaders. Law lecturer Shamsheer Singh Thind said while Lim had the moral capacity to forgive Dr Mahathir for jailing him during the infamous Op Lalang period, he should not forgive him for causing the country to lose billions of ringgit.

"Lim had written two books on the BMF scandal and issued numerous

press statements, demanding a Royal Commission of Inquiry to be established for what he called 'the greatest banking and financial scandal in Malaysian history'.

"In a 1987 press statement, Lim had also said that Dr Mahathir was personally liable for the US\$200 million (RM886 million) loss suffered by Bank Bumiputra after he (Dr Ma-

hathir) requested the said bank to give a loan to Maminco Sdn Bhd, a company which had no asset.

"Lim also said that the BMF scandal cost Malaysians US\$2.5 billion and 'the government had given the Malaysian people and the world the impression that it had a lot of things to hide, and was going out of its way to protect the BMF culprits.' But now, Lim himself is protecting Dr Mahathir," Shamsheer said.

Former Sepang DAP parliamentary liaison committee member, Tan Tuan Tat said Lim used to "howl" at any issue in order to prop himself up as the "people's champion".

"Of course, he is an opportunist. He has to be nice to Dr Mahathir now because he needs the Malay votes to win GE14.

"One wonders what has happened to DAP's mantra on Competency, Accountability and Transparency, or CAT," he said.



Tunku Abdul Aziz
Tunku Ibrahim