

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	17 JULY 2017

PAKATAN LACKS MUTUAL RESPECT

DAP is trying to control everything, including what its allies think

LAST week, Pakatan Harapan, comprising DAP, PKR, Parti Amanah Negara and PPBM, announced its leadership line-up, listing jailed PKR leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as *ketua umum* (de facto chief), former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as chairman and PKR president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as president.

It was agreed and signed by the parties' leaders. However, it did not address the most important question: who will be Pakatan Harapan's choice as prime minister if it obtains a majority in Parliament?

The indecisiveness of the pact's presidential council says a lot about what the rakyat can expect from Pakatan when it comes to making a decision.

Pakatan's choice to fill the top three positions with PKR and Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) warlords also raises your eyebrows, as DAP, the party that holds the most lawmakers in Pakatan, settles with its secretary-general being one of three

deputy presidents.

Could it be that Pakatan came to the decision to woo Malay voters? Or could it really be the case of DAP taking a back seat and letting PKR and PPBM lead, only to disappoint its supporters, who hope that DAP can represent them better?

Whatever their reasons, how the coalition's new strategy will work to garner support in the next general election remains to be seen.

Distrust among Pakatan parties is crystal clear, not only from the failure to name their choice for prime minister, but also how the pact's leaders have been airing their dirty linen.

The lack of respect among Pakatan leaders is very much visible. Even today, when the general election is just around the corner, Pakatan's big guns are not on the same page on many issues.

Two weeks ago, PKR deputy

president Datuk Seri Azmin Ali told reporters that the now-defunct Pakatan Rakyat still exists in the Selangor government.

The Selangor menteri besar has taken a lot of flak for from his allies for the statement, including DAP, which was quick to jump on him on social media.

I believe Azmin was trying to be a gentleman and be responsible, understanding that Pakatan Rakyat was the pact that the rakyat voted in twice.

Even though the pact, which included Pas, is defunct, the fact remains that the leaders have to respect the people's mandate. And, this was what Azmin believed in and wanted to uphold, hence, his

decision to continue working with Pas executive councillors and assemblymen.

But despite letting Azmin decide what is best for the state's administration, his allies could not wait to at least hold a meeting to discuss the issue before firing shots at him.

Even DAP national publicity secretary Tony Pua dared to

ridicule him on Twitter.

Not only that, DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang, a veteran politician who understands the effects of public quarrels, also took a jab at Azmin on Twitter for making the statement.

The actions of Pakatan leaders, especially DAP, speaks volumes of the lack of mutual respect among them.

It also shows how DAP tries to control everything, including what their allies think and believe in, as what it did to Pas.

I pity Azmin, who has been trying to hold Pas from moving further away from the opposition pact. But can Azmin do it, especially with DAP stabbing him in his back? If Pakatan wants to win, they should at least streamline their leadership and think about how to move forward. Inciting hatred against the ruling party may help them get votes, but will the majority want to leave their fate in the hands of an ambiguous pact?

harizm@nst.com.my

The writer is NST's staff correspondent in Shah Alam. As a person, he likes fishing; as a journalist and citizen, he wishes to see a better future for the nation, where politicians work together for the rakyat, and civil servants are free from corruption



Datuk Seri Azmin Ali

NST-17/7/2017 pg. 20