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Kit Siang: Najib may mirror Dr M's 'goodies-laden budget to polls' tactic

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Lim Kit Siang has not ruled out the possibility of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak taking a leaf from Dr Mahathir Mohamad's rule as prime minister, for use before the next general election. After all, Najib had considered Mahathir as his mentor before the former prime minister embarked on the warpath against him.

Lim said he mentioned this scenario to Mahathir when the two were seated on the stage at a Pakatan Harapan ceramah in Shah Alam last night.

“I told the former prime minister that the current prime minister... may be taking a leaf from his premiership in 1999 and dissolve Parliament after he (Najib) presents his 2018 budget of goodies on Oct 27, 2017, for the holding of the 14th general election,” Lim said in a statement today.

The DAP veteran recalled how Mahathir dissolved Parliament amid the debate on the 2000 budget on Nov 10, 1999, two weeks after presenting the budget. Nomination for the 10th general election, he said, was fixed on Nov 20 and polling took place on Nov 29. The 1999 general election was significant as it came in the wake of Mahathir sacking his former deputy Anwar Ibrahim a year earlier and the birth of the Reformasi movement. Lim said Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's statement that the general election would not take place in the next three months dovetailed into the possibility that the polls could be held after the budget presentation.

“One indication that the 14th general election could be held this year, rather than next year, is the announcement by the Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Razali Ismail that good news awaits the Felda community, with Najib expected to announce, among others, measures to be taken by the government to help reduce the financial burdens of Felda settlers at the 2017 Felda settlers' celebration this Sunday.

“Yesterday, Communications and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak said the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) national project might be costly, but it is Najib's 'gift' to the people of Malaysia. This is, of course, a cock-eyed argument, for the money did not come from Najib's private pockets but from funds from the Treasury,” he added.

On the basis of Salleh's logic, Lim said the iconic Twin Towers could be considered as Mahathir's gift to Malaysians.

“Malaysians do not need any gift from Najib, but only good governance and accountability, especially with regard to the international multi-billion dollar 1MDB money-laundering scandal that has plunged Malaysia into the infamy of a global kleptocracy,” he added.