

**Umno and BN will prevail, says Daim**  
**Free Malaysia Today**  
**March 28, 2011**

KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Daim Zainuddin is confident that Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN) will prevail, based on their sensitivity to the current political scenario.

The former finance minister and former minister with special functions said that as long as the people were rational and wise to differentiate the "padi" from the "husk", he believed BN would continue to rule.

"I don't think BN will perform worse than in the 2008 general election. The political situation in 2008 was very different from now," he said in an interview published in today's edition of Mingguan Malaysia.

Hence, Daim who is also former Umno treasurer, advised Umno and BN leaders to be always careful and sensitive to public criticisms and demands, no matter how small, although they were aware it was impossible to solve all the problems as demanded.

He reminded that if they were not careful in all their actions, a calm situation could suddenly turn tumultuous.

Daim said every elected representative and BN leader needed to work hard to ensure "Umno lives and not seek a living from Umno".

Therefore, all of them including the minor leaders should always "turun padang" (go down to the field) and not wait for the "field" to go to them, he said in the long interview which also touched on current political issues in the country.

He said by going down to the field, they could get the correct feedback to solve problems faced by the people, and this could further strengthen Umno and BN.

He cited Malacca Chief Minister Mohd Ali Rustam who always went down to meet the people by attending wedding feasts and funerals, and visit victims of fires and accidents.

"If he (Mohd Ali) cannot be present, he will send a representative and then a message through SMS. He is people-friendly," he said.

**BN candidates must be clean**

Daim, who is now 73, said the Umno and BN machinery must be "polished", improved and modernised in tandem with the social transformation, information technology development and ever-changing economy.

He noted the way Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak got close to the people through his blog and Twitter account by spontaneously communicating with them, especially the young.

"We should remember that our youths today are far more educated, better exposed and have wider networking compared to the youths in the post-independence period.

"Their dreams, their hopes and their aspirations are different from those of their parents."

Daim said Umno and BN should clearly understand all these matters so that they could carry out sustainable programmes that would be appreciated by and benefit this group of people.

"If this group could be taught to understand, appreciate and respect Umno and BN's struggles, hence the society and nation will see a brighter tomorrow."

Daim said Najib's leadership strength alone might not be enough to ensure BN's victory, instead the BN (election) candidates must be clean and accepted by the people.

"BN members must all be united in facing the opposition because when Umno is strong, BN will be strong too and this strength will bring victory."

In the interview, Daim also noted that the rhetorics and slogans of the opposition parties in the 2008 general election campaign were full of "honey sweetness" but where they were able to rule, these turned out to be just empty promises.

However, he said, the people's mood and perception towards BN had become more positive after 2008 and this was proven by the results of the by-elections that followed.

After the 2008 elections, BN won eight of the 16 by-elections but since November 2010, it won all the five seats contested and with bigger majorities.

"However, these are by-elections, so don't be too confident. One of the reason's for BN's dismal performance in 2008 was over-confidence. The people still wish to see change and BN must provide that," said Daim.

### **What has Anwar done?**

He also questioned the development brought to states, namely Kedah, Penang and Selangor, which are ruled by the opposition pact.

"How many billions worth of new investments have come in, especially from Arab investors brought in by Selangor's economic adviser (Anwar Ibrahim)?" he asked.

Touching on the political developments in the country, Daim said overall, the situation was calm and the people now appeared to be mature on political issues.

"The effort of Najib since becoming prime minister to rebuild public trust and confidence in the BN government has been the main factor for the calm situation.

"I see Najib's honesty and sincerity in trying to improve the living standard of the people, especially the low-income and the poor," he said.

On Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's views on him expressed in his book, "A Doctor in the House: The Memoirs of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad", Daim said he never expected Mahathir to be that frank.

"I am very thankful to Mahathir for his clear and candid explanation on my actions which were questioned during my time as minister," he said.

On his own situation now of being away from the political scene, Daim said he was busy as usual although no longer in government as he was still meeting foreign investors who came visiting or meeting them overseas, to assist them where he could.

"Since the global financial crisis, I have been spending a lot of time in the Gulf states. The crisis has resulted in those not affected to find more stable and safer places, like Malaysia, to invest," he said.