

Ex-minister claims BN bought votes with cash
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PETALING JAYA, Jan 17 — A former federal minister from Umno claimed today that cash was handed out in previous election campaigns in attempts to buy votes, a tactic known as “bomb”.

Tan Sri Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said in a forum today that he had experienced himself how cash handouts ranging from RM200 to RM1,000 was used in Barisan Nasional’s election campaigns to gain voter support.

“I have been the head of delegation of many campaigns and I have been given lump sums of money to distribute,” said the former Information Minister at the Malaysia Strategic Outlook Conference 2012 here. “It was a blatant use of money to buy votes.”

Abdul Kadir (picture), who was also formerly the Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism, said that the word used for the strategy was called “bomb”.

He added though that he personally didn’t use the money.

James Chin, who heads the School of Social Sciences at Monash University at Sunway, and who spoke at the forum after Abdul Kadir said that “bombing” was a very effective tool in Sabah and Sarawak.

During his presentation, Abdul Kadir said that while he still held positions in Umno, he wanted to remind them of the “Merdeka trust” — which meant giving the people the right to truly free and fair elections.

He also urged Umno not to fear losing if it was sincere in its intentions.

“If you lose accept it; people change governments all the time in US and Australia,” he said. “I am an Umno man, I don’t mind if I lose. If you are there just to make millions for yourself and your cronies or if I have made my billions and am afraid I will be arrested after I lose power, then I will do all these tricks.”

“If you are sincere, you have nothing to fear,” he added.

He said that to have free and fair elections, there must be equal access to the media and GLCs and government departments must be neutral.

“You must give them (the opposition) the freedom to have TV, radio and newspapers,” he said. “For 50 years, PAS has been asking for a newspaper licence but none given — the government is a big bully.”

He also said that during elections, Barisan Nasional should not be making use of the Ministry of Information, Felda, Felcra, the Special Branch and other federal agencies to support their campaign.

Abdul Kadir is also the deputy president of non-partisan pro-unity NGO Angkatan Amanah

Merdeka (Amanah) and executive chairman of the Sazean group.

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