

Playing the 'Janji Ditepati' game
FreeMalaysiaToday
By Jeswan Kaur
July 25, 2012

Barisan Nasional's unexpected defeat in the 2008 general election has failed to educate the ruling government on 'eating the humble pie'.

On the contrary, the coalition has been taking liberties with the voters, assuming the 'goodies' doled out to them will buy their silence in questioning the federal government over its acts of nepotism and cronyism.

The coming 13th GE will confirm in the rakyat's eyes the credibility of the federal government, which post-2008 has become questionable.

To come out with catchy slogans like "People first, performance later" and the 1Malaysia "Janji Ditepati" (Promises Fulfilled) is not good enough to win the people's confidence, not when much dirt on BN has been dug up by Pakatan Rakyat.

Recently, DAP publicity chief Tony Pua alleged that the daughter of former chief secretary to the government, Mohd Sidek Hassan (who has been appointed Petronas chairperson effective early this month after retiring from civil service) has monopoly over the newly introduced resaleable alternative energy scheme.

Not just that, Pua added that companies linked to Mohd Sidek's daughter Suzi Suliana may rake in about RM70 million in profit annually by holding 32.4% of the nation's solar energy supply.

Pua claimed that research shows Suzi controls more than 32% or 45MW from the quota set for solar energy via the Feed-In Tariff (FiT) mechanism, far above the limit of 1MW-5W to companies.

(Under the FiT programme, power generated from renewable energy would be resold through the Sustainable Energy Development Authority).

Suzi is said to have secured the contracts through direct ownership of three companies (all of which were only set up in November last year, which was less than a month before applications for the permits were out) and nine others through partnerships despite the government's pledge to disallow any form of preferential treatment.

Such acts of cronyism did not end there. Earlier PKR disclosed that the eldest son of former prime Dr Mahathir Mohamad is the owner of a new petrol and gas company called Petron which has taken over Esso Malaysia Bhd and all Esso stations, rebranding them as Petron.

Petron, owned by Mirzan Mahathir acquired oil refiner Exxon Mobil Malaysia Bhd in April buying 65% of the firm, giving it full ownership of subsidiaries Exxon Mobil Malaysia Sdn Bhd and Exxon Mobil Borneo Sdn Bhd.

Petron has since rebranded the 580 former Exxon Mobil fuel stations nationwide and is expected to continue doing so with 120 more stations by the end of the year.

BN and cronyism inseparable

PKR de facto chief Anwar Ibrahim alleged that Petron paid for the acquisition with money obtained from the sale of shares in the San Miguel beer company.

Anwar also raised concern over a deal between Petron and MAS with Petron signing an agreement with the national carrier to supply fuel for MAS' entire Airbus A380 fleet for a period of six months.

There is more dirt; on July 10, Pakatan Rakyat revealed that Putrajaya had awarded the Ampang LRT line extension project to the losing bidder George Kent Consortium, despite the government's denial of any foul play in the contract award process.

As proof to support its claim, Pakatan's strategic director Rafizi Ramli showed an official letter dated June 25 which stated clearly the RM1.2 billion contract had been awarded to the consortium on June 21.

This was just eight days before Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak would "not deny nor confirm" if the contract was given to the engineering consortium while dismissing any discrepancy in the process.

Rafizi also alleged that Najib and the top bosses of George Kent are "golf buddies". And Najib who is also the finance minister and the highest authority in the Treasury's Procurement Committee, had himself penned the approval of the contract to a different consortium, Belfour Beatty-Invesys Consortium in January this year.

As always, greed being the underlying factor for BN saw the amount stated being RM167 million more than that which Befour Beatty-Invesys Consortium had offered.

Stop playing tricks

It will not do the premier who is also the BN chief any good as far his credibility in the eyes of the rakyat goes.

Najib, the Pekan MP, received a 65 percent approval rating in a Merdeka Center poll in May this year but the BN government led by him had a support of only 48 per cent in the survey done after the Bersih 3.0 protest on April 28 this year.

That explains the feeble and pathetic attempt at 'reminding' the rakyat of the handouts courtesy of the BN government and that 'reciprocity' was due on the people's part to support the BN government unconditionally.

However, the 'Janji Ditepati' blackmail being employed by BN does not warrant any obligation on the part of the rakyat to support Najib's leadership and why should they when the premier is far from interested in eliminating cronyism and nepotism that is now thriving in the country.

It seems right when the opposition takes BN to task for threatening the public by using 'Janji Ditepati' as the theme for this year's 55th independence and Malaysia Day celebrations respectively.

The theme has also far from pleased the rakyat and has become the target of public ridicule and anger on the Internet.

One user, @Hazrul_Basyen, in his June 26 posting said: "I'm never expect that our #TemaMerdeka this year is "Janji Ditepati". Tak dak semangatlah nak sambut Merdeka tahun ni (No enthusiasm to celebrate Merdeka this year)!!!!" [sic].

Hoping for no less a miracle, Najib who is also Umno president has taken to travelling the breadth and depth of the country, engrossed in a campaign misleadingly dubbed "Jelajah Janji Ditepati", using the campaign to instead condemn the opposition, accusing it of being unreliable and not living up to its promises.

However, Najib's post to pillar attempts are not going to take him anywhere, not until he proves that he is a man of his word in fighting corruption and its cousins nepotism and cronyism.

As the scenario appears, the premier seems to be taking the rakyat for a ride, his bag of tricks filled with one too many hoaxes to woo the voters. But then will the voters allow themselves to be hoodwinked? Only time will reveal.

Jeswan Kaur is a freelance writer and a FMT columnist.

Copyright (C) 2009-2012 MToday News Sdn. Bhd.

Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/opinion/2012/07/22/playing-the-janji-ditepati-game/>