

**Chronic low support shows BN betting on wrong horse, says Rafizi**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**July 27, 2012**  
**By Ida Lim**

KUALA LUMPUR, July 27 — Barisan Nasional (BN)'s persistently low score in approval ratings should worry leaders within the ruling coalition in the run-up to key national polls, said PKR's Rafizi Ramli today.

The opposition party's strategy chief appeared to suggest that Datuk Seri Najib Razak's election campaign method, which has seen the prime minister's personal popularity stay consistently buoyant above the 60 per cent mark, was not working as well for the 13-member BN coalition he heads.

Najib's approval ratings have been steady in the 60 to 70 per cent band over the past three surveys by Merdeka Center as speculation mounts that he will call snap elections this year before the Barisan Nasional (BN) mandate expires in April 2013.

In contrast, the BN's approval rating dipped six per cent to 42 per cent in the same month, the independent pollster revealed in their latest survey released yesterday.

"I believe those in BN are already starting to get worried with the approach taken by Najib who is campaigning as if he is president (of the country)," Rafizi told a news conference today.

He said that Najib has been projecting himself as the "pulse and saviour of BN" but was not, at the same time, defending the other component parties within the coalition.

"It's not a team effort; it's actually his persona. He believes it's his personal strength that will pull BN now.

"If I were Najib, I would be very gloomy. I would be very worried," Rafizi said.

He noted that Najib's popularity had dipped to a low of 64 per cent in June and could still go lower in the run-up to the 13th general election, now speculated to be called in September after the Muslim Aidilfitri celebration.

But Rafizi said that more telling was the public's level of trust and satisfaction towards the ruling BN, which he said is now "very low" at 42 per cent, with a major drop in satisfaction coming from Malay voters as seen in the Merdeka Center poll.

He said the polls results "just confirm our belief all along that this election is going to be a very close election. It's going to be almost 50-50."

Rafizi also said the drop in Malay voters' support showed a big disconnect between the government's ambitious transformation plans and "the working-class Malays".

He said that they "don't feel the effect" of the reforms of the Najib administration, saying that goods prices still rise but their incomes did not.

Referring to the independent pollster Merdeka Center's own report, Rafizi said voters will continue to focus on "bread and butter issues."

Hakcipta © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/chronic-low-support-shows-bn-bettin-g-on-wrong-horse-says-rafizi/>

