

Dr M's 'devil you know' plea an act of desperation, Pakatan MPs say
Malaysian Insider
August 23, 2012
By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 23 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) lawmakers today called Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's "devil you know" plea for voters to back Barisan Nasional (BN) the clearest admission of the former prime minister's alleged wrongdoings during his 22-year tenure, with the daughter of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim calling her father's biggest foe an old man desperate to remain relevant.

The lawmakers said Dr Mahathir's words were a part of a desperate, last ditched attempt from the latter to convince Malaysians to vote for Barisan Nasional (BN), even if it would be a vote for the "devil".

But PKR vice president Nurul Izzah Anwar said Dr Mahathir's pitch was likely to fall flat as it was nothing more than "an old man's attempt to gain relevance".

"Sadly, his is an irrelevant voice; and the only reason he is voicing out is to seek support for an Umno-BN that is devoid.

"His only currency, if any, would be relegated to the rural heartland, in which he would undoubtedly do his best to win over. Again... nothing more than an old man's attempt to gain relevance," the Lembah Pantai MP told The Malaysian Insider.

In a blog posting yesterday, Dr Mahathir told Malaysians that they were better off with the "devil [they] know" in BN rather than a PR federal government, which he said was likely to bankrupt the nation with its populist promises.

"The BN has listened to the people and has changed many laws and policies. All that the people need to do is to urge the BN to carry out whatever change the people desire.

"Better the devil you know than the angel you don't," the former prime minister wrote.

PAS MP Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said Dr Mahathir's admission to BN being the "devil" would not do Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and BN any good as it would only further aggravate the public's erosion of confidence in the current government.

"If anything, it embroils them (BN) further, and worsens the perception of BN among middle ground voters... because whatever little that Najib has managed to pull through, and him and BN are poles apart, would be destroyed by the words of Dr Mahathir.

"He is only adding insult to injury," the Kuala Selangor MP told The Malaysian Insider.

Agreeing, DAP Socialist Youth chief Anthony Loke said the country's longest serving prime minister, who is still said to wield strong influence in the ruling Umno, was afraid that his "tainted past" would be revealed under a PR-led government.

Dr Mahathir is "panicky, the Rasah MP added, and is even willing to describe BN as the "devil" and call PR the "angel you don't know" just to instil in voters a fear of the unknown.

Dr Mohd Hatta Ramli, another PAS MP, refuted Dr Mahathir's prediction that a PR-led government would become authoritarian, adding that it was untrue that voters have not yet had a taste of a PR administration.

He reminded Dr Mahathir that PR's track record could be seen from its rule of four states since Election 2008 - Penang, Selangor, Kedah and Kelantan - which he said have been governed well.

"Look at the four states that we ruled... all are based on open tenders, we declassified OSA (Official Secrets Act) documents for the public to access... is that authoritarian?" he said when contacted here.

Agreeing, Nurul Izzah said that PR has also laid out all its pledges of political reforms to ensure that the laws are consistent with rights enshrined under the Federal Constitution.

The eldest daughter of Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim also rubbished Dr Mahathir's remarks on her father, and pointed out that should PR come to power, Anwar has already promised not to hold the finance ministry portfolio even if he becomes prime minister.

"He (Dr Mahathir) has lost all credibility to speak on any matter, let alone our future form of governance," she said.

In his blog posting, Dr Mahathir had taken a swipe at Anwar, who was formerly finance minister and deputy prime minister during his tenure, claiming that the leader's party was rife with cronyism and nepotism.

"Five years to give (PR) a trial as government is dangerous. Many things can be destroyed in five years. Besides, the opposition as government will ensure there will be no return for the BN. Officers in the government will be used to 'gempar' (threaten) whoever tries to change government.

"Already we see this person who claims to fight for free speech suing and resorting to the courts to shut the mouth of his critics. Other powers of the government will be similarly abused.

"Nepotism and cronyism will be employed as indeed they are in the party he now heads," Dr Mahathir had said.

Hakcipta © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/dr-ms-devil-you-know-plea-an-act-of-desperation-pakatan-mps-say/>