

**BN Must Close Ranks To Win Big
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 27 (Bernama) -- One would have thought that the dust had already settled after more than a week since Nomination Day, especially the burning question on the candidacy or non-candidacy of so-called "winnable" candidates.

Looks like it hasn't with talk of disgruntled politicians on both sides of the political divide who had been dropped from contesting in the 13th General Election not doing much or enough to help those who had replaced them.

It is only understandable that they have been doing just that, especially for those who had been sidelined as they were at one time entertaining thoughts of joining the hustings but only to be told that they were not needed this time around.

For some who were left by the wayside it is like a big slap in the face after they had gone the extra mile or worked round-the-clock to rally support in their targeted constituencies.

Many had toiled for the last two years or so to show that they were "winnable" by mobilising funds and efforts to help the needy or whatever needed to be rectified.

In other words, they went out of their way to get noticed and amplify the fact that they were indeed the truly suitable representatives of the people.

But winnable or not is a subjective matter.

One may think that he or she can pull it off for their party but others in the party may not think along the same lines.

There are those who seem to be getting along well with their own party members but whether they have the support of others in the same constituency is another matter altogether.

It is certainly a bewildering thought for some who had scored well in their governmental duties and KPIs but only to find themselves out of the picture.

Many would not want to be in their shoes or be even near them when such a devastating piece of news had hit them like a tonne of bricks.

Sometimes the wounded or castaways would need some space or solitude for them to lick their wounds or hurt, to perhaps reflect where they had gone wrong or failed in winning the hearts of party elders, and then contemplate on their next course of action.

Some are numbed into inaction and have done nothing much to support the party's choice of candidates or campaigns but those who have fire in their bellies have taken the almost unthinkable route to stand as independents in an attempt to prove a point.

On the other side of the coin, party elders also want to demonstrate a point and have sacked these desperadoes from their ranks.

It is not easy for party leaders to make a decision, especially when it comes to dropping someone.

They would have to dig deep in the recesses of their minds, networks and resources to determine who are most suitable or winnable because the stakes are extremely high.

A few people stand out when it comes to toeing the party line. One is Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat, the former MP for Pandan.

Although much-touted as a winnable candidate, he was not fielded by the MCA for reasons best known to the party leadership.

But Ong chose not to stand as an independent although he has enough support to do so.

Instead, his aide, Allan Tan, is standing. Whether Ong has chosen Tan to be his proxy to prove a point is difficult to say.

Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu was rumoured to be keen to stand again to prove that his loss in Sungai Siput in 2008 was due to the political tsunami sweeping in favour of the Opposition then.

But when the current crop of MIC leaders decided otherwise, Samy did not kick up a fuss and toed the party line.

Another exemplary politician is perhaps Information, Communication and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim.

Although he just turned 71, the fit-as-a-fiddle Rais, who scored the highest points in terms of the ministerial KPIs for 2012, was perhaps counting on another term. But it was not to be.

If age was his downside, then two other GE13 candidates from Barisan Nasional are older than him by five years.

There could be other reasons why Rais is not on the list this time around.

But life has to go on. And Rais, showing the gentleman in him, admirably turned up in Jelevu on Nomination Day with his wife, Datin Seri Maznah Rais, as a show of support for the replacement, Zainuddin Ismail.

Besides still going round to relentlessly extol the virtues of 1MALAYSIA, a platform chosen by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to provide a more equitable and inclusive delivery system for the rakyat, Rais has also suggested that the BN's candidates list in future be made at least two months before Nomination Day to minimise the backlash or fallout.

For BN to win big, political observers believe that there must be more party loyalists like Ong, Samy and Rais.

It is time to close ranks, forget about the bitter past and concentrate on garnering more support for the party to win big.

That is the big picture and only goal at this pressing moment, they feel.

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