

**Mat Taib: Umno has lost its potency, Pakatan better**  
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**By Zurairi AR and Md Izwan**

SHAH ALAM, April 23 — Hours after officially joining PAS, Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib went on the campaign trail last night and said he had jumped parties because Umno had lost its potency to work for the people.

Standing right in the middle of the state capital that he helped develop, the former Selangor menteri besar said PAS could help make his vision of Shah Alam as the crown jewel city of Malay and Muslim culture come true.

"It is time ... Umno has lost its potency," Muhammad said as he joined Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders on stage in the rally in Shah Alam.

"I believe PR has the ability, and it can carry on the continuity of BN's rule to a higher level," he added to cheers from the predominantly Malay crowd.

The former Umno strongman, popularly known as Mat Taib, appeared nervous in front of the crowd last night, his first public appearance after losing his Cabinet post in a 2009 reshuffle by Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Muhammad was not spared from being teased for his former affiliation as PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu mentioned jokingly Umno and BN's misdeeds during his time in the ruling coalition.

Earlier, Muhammad spoke of his dream of seeing Shah Alam as the only Malay city in the world, but lamented its lack of spiritual character, calling it his failed ambition.

He described Islam as a "religion of cities", a point that was also made by PAS vice-president Datuk Husam Musa in his campaign to capture the administrative capital Putrajaya.

The former menteri besar, who helmed the country's wealthiest state from 1986 to 1997, told reporters after joining PAS that Malaysia and Selangor had enjoyed development under BN, but stressed that it was time for change.

"Children will be messed up if development is soulless," Muhammad told reporters at the PAS headquarters earlier yesterday.

"Look at Shah Alam. Which party can restore the soul? It must be a party that fights for religion," he added.

The Islamist party's pull of Muhammad and several establishment figures will help hone its evolving image as a progressive party bidding for federal power in multi-racial Malaysia at the May 5 polls.

Several corporate figures and senior government pensioners, including high-ranking officers such as former secretaries-general, ex-envoys as well as those from the police and armed forces, have joined PAS at the end of their service.

Among them are former criminal investigation police chief Datuk Fauzi Shaari, former Land

and Co-operative Development Ministry secretary-general Datuk Dr Nik Zain Nik Yusof and Datuk Ramli Buyong, deputy vice-president of Felcra Berhad.

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