

**Raja Nazrin: Integrity, commitment to fight graft can improve BN's image**  
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**BY CLARA CHOOI**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 20 — A government with integrity and that is committed to wielding the rule of law to weed out corruption without fear, favour or political interference can redeem itself in the eyes of the public, Perak Regent Raja Dr Nazrin Shah said today. The son of Perak Ruler Sultan Azlan Shah pointed out that it had been this very commitment to integrity that led Barisan Nasional (BN) to a staggering victory in Election 2004 but the coalition's failure to fulfil its promises resulted in drastic losses in the following 2008 polls.

Urging leaders to walk in the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad and Malaysia's founding fathers as well as past leaders such as Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein and Tun Hussein Onn, Raja Nazrin said integrity was the key underlying factor in determining the success of a national leader.

"The ability of a leader to combat corruption... actions that show he is brave enough to take to weed out every cell of corruption in the anatomy of an administration... would only help strengthen his position," he said, according to a copy of his speech text during the Integrity Convention organised by the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission in Putrajaya this morning.

Raja Nazrin (picture) added that such a leader would also help build a positive image for the government, apart from boosting public confidence and respect in the leader and improving his integrity level in the eyes of the people.

"And integrity can be strengthened if the administration of a country is founded on the rule of law, on laws that are enforced without fear or favour, without political interference," he said.

Citing the 2004 general election, Raja Nazrin pointed out that when Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi took his oath of office as prime minister on October 31, 2003, the top focus on his agenda had been on integrity and implementing anti-corruption measures to clean up the government.

Just five days after he was sworn in, the Abdullah Administration established the Malaysian Integrity Institute, Raja Nazrin recalled.

A few months on, the Royal Commission of Inquiry on the improvement on the operations of the Royal Malaysia Police was formed, he added.

"The 11th general election (in 2004) occurred with a backdrop of a leadership and government image that prioritised integrity, that fought for the combating of corruption without fear or favour," the royal leader said.

Three corruption cases even saw the conviction of high-ranking personalities like Tan Sri Eric Chia, Baharuddin Ahmad and Tan Sri Kasitah Gaddam — a scenario that Raja Nazrin said had likely influenced voters during the 2004 polls.

"BN soared to a landslide victory... winning 198 federal seats and obtaining 63.9 per cent of the popular vote," he recalled.

But between the 2004 polls and the 12th general election in 2008, Raja Nazrin said voters found that the government had failed to fulfil its promises, rendering them no longer confident even in the achievement index presented to them by the government. "The people were promised, given hopes... and they believed in those hopes, and gave their support.

"But the reality of what transpired between the 11th and the 12th general election, is that there was a failure to fulfil the high expectations of the people.

"The people felt that these words went unfulfilled. They could no longer be convinced with speeches — with promises; with achievement indexes," he said.

In Election 2008, BN lost its coveted two-thirds parliamentary majority when it swept just 140 seats to the opposition's 82 seats; it also lost five states — Perak, Selangor, Penang, Kelantan and Kedah.

Raja Nazrin did not speak on BN's losses in the just-concluded 13th general election earlier this month, however, but stressed on the importance of integrity in any government administration as means to improve on public confidence.

He warned of greater temptations today that he said could lead to the further erosion of integrity and urged leaders to return to the path of righteousness before they fall prey to such temptations.

"These temptations come in the shape of titles and money, in the shape of beautiful women, diamonds, emeralds and sapphires, in the shape of vacations and holidays, mansions and luxury condominiums.

"Today, these temptations are so diverse, with an incredible charm that makes it so difficult to reject, that renders it so easy for faiths to collapse," he said.

In Election 2013, BN performed worst than it did in 2008, snapping up just 133 seats to Pakatan Rakyat's (PR) 89 seats in the 222-seat Parliament.

Despite recapturing Kedah, BN lost the overall popular vote, scoring just under 48 per cent of the votes cast to PR's 51 per cent, an outcome that has thrown the country's political landscape into further disarray despite the completion of the long-awaited polls

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