

It's Malay rule, so no difference if BN or Pakatan in power, argues Lee Kuan Yew
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Singapore's first prime minister Lee Kuan Yew (pic) has a sober message for those counting on Pakatan Rakyat (PR) to usher in a new era of race relations in Malaysia: get real.

And the chance of Malay special privileges dismantled by PR in the event that the pact captures Putrajaya? Next to nothing.

To begin with, he said, the chance of the opposition coming to power in the near future was a very long shot. And then there were also the structural problems with the coalition of PAS, DAP and PKR.

He labelled the Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim-led coalition as "an opportunistic ad-hoc group not held together by even a vaguely coherent set of ideas but by a common desire to unseat the government".

His cutting description of PR and its shortcomings will not surprise political pundits or even seasoned opposition politicians such as Lim Kit Siang and Anwar.

The general view in Kuala Lumpur is that despite the sometimes very public run-ins with the Barisan Nasional-led government (BN) here, the PAP government in Singapore still prefers the status quo in Malaysia.

It is more comfortable dealing with BN, having invested more than four decades building up links at different levels.

So it may be little surprise that Lee is dismissive of PR. He said in his new book launched yesterday, *One Man's View Of The World*, that as long as PR does not actually occupy Putrajaya and does not have to implement multiracial policies, some semblance of unity can be maintained within the pact.

"When it comes to the crunch, however, PR will not be able to do away with Malay supremacy. The moment the bluff is called and it is handed full power to push ahead, it will either be torn apart from within or be paralysed by indecision.

"If it attempts to move in any meaningful way, PAS, a Malay-Muslim party that will hold if not a majority of seats within the coalition, then at least a significant enough share to give it veto power, would block action in an instant.

"In doing so, PAS would be responding to the same electoral pressures that Umno faces from the Malay ground," said Lee.

PR won 89 parliamentary seats, denying BN two-thirds control of parliament for the second consecutive election. It also retained control of the two economic powerhouses of Selangor and Penang and obtained 51 per cent of the popular vote.

One of the main planks of the PR manifesto was a more equitable distribution of wealth. Anwar and other opposition leaders have slammed the BN's affirmative action programme as a policy that has been hijacked by the Umno elite to enrich themselves and family

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