

## **Why Umno leaders are singing such a vile tune these days**

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**NEWS ANALYSIS BY THE MALAYSIAN INSIDER**

If Malaysians are offended by the vile garbage being spewed by the likes of Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam and other Umno politicians auditioning for the Umno party polls on October 19, there is more distressing news.

A recent poll of 600 Umno party members and their supporters by the respected Merdeka Center has revealed a disturbing picture of a party contented with itself and angry with just about everyone else.

A clutch of questions was asked to gauge the current perception about the ruling party by its own cadres.

In response, just under three-quarters of them said Umno should not give in too much to demands by non-Malays.

Nine out of 10 believed Umno should focus its energy on building up more support among Malays for the next general election.

And here is a real shocker. After all that has been written about the decrepit state of the party, the paucity of leaders with integrity and the hubris which resides in every pore of the party, only 17% of party members and supporters felt that the public was disgusted with Umno because its leaders had strayed from the original goals.

They basically think Umno is in good shape and only needs some tweaking here and there. And that tweaking is focused on generating more support from the Malays.

Two-thirds, or 67%, did not think that Umno is focusing too much on the Malay agenda. Only 16% felt that winning over non-Malays is Umno's biggest challenge, believing that the priority should be getting older leaders to make way for younger ones and increasing support of Malays for the party.

In GE13, Umno/Barisan Nasional snagged 61.6% of the Malays, thanks primarily to the strategem of creating fear among Malays with the bogey that non-Malays are aiming to wrest political control of the country.

Since the general election, Umno politicians have unleashed two streams of rhetoric: that Malay voters should be rewarded for returning BN to power and that opposition supporters must be punished.

Every candidate for the Umno elections has tried to play the race card, knowing well that there is a ready and receptive audience among party delegates for the blame rhetoric.

It is much easier for the party – from the top to rank-and-file – to blame ungrateful Chinese or belligerent Christians for their dismal electoral performance than to focus on the real reasons for losing more parliamentary seats and the popular vote, compared to 2008.

Against this backdrop, it is much easier for Ali Rustam to spout racist garbage today and blame everyone but himself for his defeat in the general election. Just listen to him.

"The Chinese want everything. We have treated them well. The Malays have been good to them... when the Chinese want help, request to build schools, scholarships, the government gave it to them. But when election time came, they forgot all this.

"All that is important is that they take over the Malays and turn them into pendatang," he told a gathering of 100 people at an event by Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Berhad yesterday.

Naturally, the crowd responded in a manner only Umno can, by asking the Chinese to go home.

He should be charged with sedition but that will not happen because the police are no longer honest brokers in Malaysia. Don't even expect him to be reprimanded by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, the champion of moderates everywhere but in his own country.

He and others in Umno feel that since the next general election is five years down the road, they can say anything and trample on non-Malays and play every race and religious card in their playbook. They don't care if your sensitivities are offended or if you think they are stupid, corrupt and lazy.

They have the floor and they can say anything they want. So what if some Malaysians are offended? So what if Chinese or Indians or Kadazandusuns are angry?

In the minds of Najib, Zahid and gang, they cannot be punished for any transgression. That is why Zahid can say the most damning things and just ignore the uproar. He can defend a criminal organisation like Tiga Line, support a shoot-to-kill policy and even condone the killing of Indian gangsters as some kind of racial payback and not care one bit about a downside.

Why? Because there is no downside in Umno for any politician who stokes the fire of racism, who speaks the language of an uncouth thug. None whatsoever. He is merely preaching to the choir. – October 8, 2013.

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