

**High-income goal not possible under BN, says Zaid**  
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**Former Umno minister says economy can still grow if Prime Minister Najib Razak retains power in GE14 but wealth will be owned by a small group of leaders.**

PETALING JAYA: Zaid Ibrahim believes that Malaysia will not become a high-income country under Barisan Nasional (BN), but instead remain a country of low wages for most of the rakyat because “Najib and Co do not care for the people, but only for mega projects”.

Zaid, who is a lawyer, questioned the lack of policies and plans by Prime Minister Najib Razak’s administration to help the people handle the high cost of living and rising food prices as well as to improve basic amenities for the poor.

“Najib’s only focus is fast trains, large ports, massive shopping complexes, and military spending.

“With poor governance, chronic corruption and lack of transparency, our cost of living will never come down to an acceptable level,” he said, adding that the only way to solve the problems of the rakyat was by replacing the current leaders.

The former defacto law minister said the economy may still grow if the BN wins the next general election (GE14), but that the people would not benefit from it.

“The economy may grow but the people will be impoverished. Malaysia’s wealth will be owned by a small group of leaders at the top.

“The rest of the people will have to contend with what we Malays describe as ‘kais pagi makan pagi, kais petang makan petang’ (surviving on a day-to-day basis),” Zaid said in a speech entitled “GE:14 Don’t play with fire”, which he delivered at the Ponderosa Golf and Country Resort, in Johor Bahru, last Friday.

“I hope you view the unfair economic policies under this prime minister seriously, because it will make many people angry. The country cannot be stable when so many people are angry.”

Saying that the country was now at a crossroads, Zaid called for the people not to allow “the corrupt to continue to rule and take the country’s riches for themselves”.

Zaid, who is now a DAP member, also blamed the Najib administration for having done nothing to ensure that large, billion-ringgit projects go through a proper system of competitive bids.

“He (Najib) does nothing to make the government procurement process clean and transparent.

“All projects, from the construction of a small mosque to infrastructure projects worth billions, end up costing a lot more than the actual price, and it’s the people of this country who have to pay for these extras,” he said.

The speech by Zaid also touched on how the country has veered of its path as originally set out by the founding fathers of this country.

He said that the people must return to the peaceful formula that our leaders set up in 1957, as “it will allow us to save and rebuild this country once again”.

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