

Analysts: Change in voting trends

Political experts say Melaka voters reverted to pre-GE14 patterns



PETALING JAYA: The landslide victory of Barisan Nasional in the Melaka election indicates that the voting trend in the country has reverted to patterns similar to the pre-GE14 where the coalition was in power for decades.

Dr Md Shukri Shuib of Universiti Utara Malaysia argued that Malaysia was seeing a resetting of political leanings among voters.

"The event of May 2018 (in which Pakatan Harapan defeated Barisan) was solely a one-off phenomenon, which apparently does not hold up over time," he said.

Md Shukri added that there were many factors that had influenced the results of the May 2018 general election, which included short-lived controversial issues.

He said the consensus within Barisan to put forth new faces as their candidates in the Melaka election also proved to be fruitful.



Lively spot: Political coalition flags in the recent election added colour to the busy Jonker Street in Melaka.

More than 80% or 24 of Barisan Nasional's 28 candidates in Melaka were fresh faces, 17 (70%) of which secured their seats.

Md Shukri said the opposition voters could be upset with Pakatan

for reasons such as the unfulfilled GE14 manifesto.

Political analyst Assoc Prof Datuk Dr Ismail Sualman believed with Barisan's solid performance in Melaka, the coalition would opt to

contest in the next general election without the cooperation of other parties.

"BN may return as it originally was and contest in the general election only with its component parties, Umno, MCA and MIC, as well as their friends in Sabah and Sarawak," he said.

Commenting on whether PAS would split from Perikatan Nasional to work with Umno in GE15, Md Shukri believed that PAS would continue to work in Perikatan due to the political leverage the coalition provides.

However, political analyst Prof Datuk Seri Dr Syed Arabi Syed Abdullah Idid contended that PAS could be inclined to side with the potential victor when contesting in GE15.

"However, Barisan Nasional or Umno will have the advantage of calling the shots," he said.

He also commented that PAS' loss in Melaka might have been contributed by voters who were upset with the decision to use the Perikatan logo.

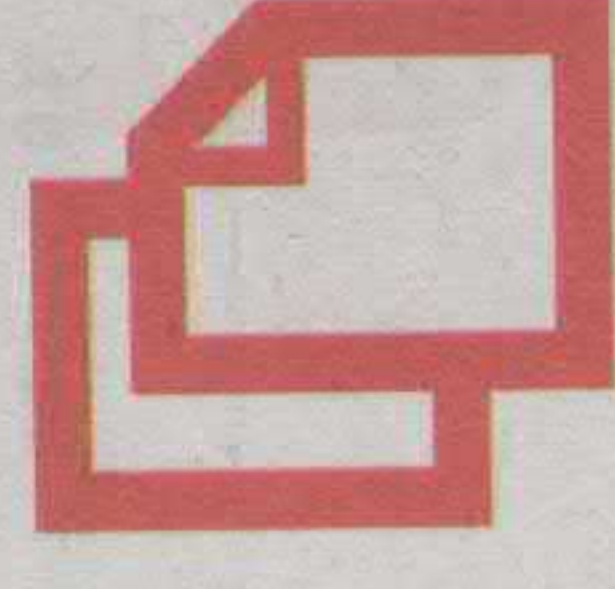
"PAS may prefer to use their own logo in the next general election, especially in stronghold areas," he said.

Addressing PKR's poor performance in the Melaka elections, Syed Arabi said the party had to be more inclusive to garner wider support from voters.

"It is the reading now that (Datuk Seri) Anwar Ibrahim is not able to command support from Malay voters but Anwar will make a point that he is still a leader," he said.

He added that PKR still needed a Malay figure as its leader, even if it decided to elect a new commander.

"This depends on whether Anwar can retool himself or he starts grooming someone to take over," he said, suggesting that Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari would make a good candidate.



A Malay tsunami in Melaka:
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