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Voters have to be wise, avoid sympathy vote trap

KUALA LUMPUR: Voters in the Kajang by-election have to make a wise choice and avoid falling into the 'sympathy vote' trap that is not going to get them anywhere.

Universiti Utara Malaysia's (UUM) Dean of the Law, Government and International Studies College Associate Prof Dr Ahmad Marthada Mohamed said instead of voting for sympathy, Kajang constituents have to evaluate their candidates' ability, integrity, leadership capabilities and their experience in serving constituents.

"Kajang voters have to make a wise choice based on the good attributes portrayed by the candidates. Only the one with the right attribute will be able to take the people's agenda to a higher level.

"In this context Barisan Nasional's (BN) candidate has a proven track record when it comes to integrity, ability and leadership.

TRACK RECORD

In the March 23 by-election, MCA's Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun representing BN is locked in a straight fight with Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) President Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

"Dr Wan Azizah was the last minute choice to replace her husband Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and even previously she won the

Permatang Pauh Parliament seat due to the sympathy votes for her husband. Therefore, when comes to ability, experience and etc it is apparent that BN's candidate has the upper hand compared with PKR's," he said.

Anwar was initially slated to contest the Kajang state seat but he was stopped on his tracks on March 8 when the Court of Appeal found him guilty of sodomy and handed him a five year jail sentence.

MCA COULD DRAW THE VOTERS

Touching on the response from the Kajang voters on BN's campaign, especially by BN's component party MCA, he opined that the recent change in MCA's leadership was a positive development that could help draw the Chinese voters back to the BN's fold.

"Hitherto the Chinese showed preference for the opposition for some reasons.

I hope that the Chinese voters will see things more rationally this time around especially looking at MCA's new leadership that is capable of not only championing the interest of the Chinese but in the bigger picture interest of all races in the country.

"MCA through the new leadership is looking at the national agenda unlike previously and this is good development and indi-

cates MCA is slowly shedding its raced based party image," he said.

FOCUS ON THE GRASSROOTS

Md Shukri also opined that the two component parties representing the Chinese, MCA and Gerakan, have to work harder to get to the grassroots and win over the voters.

He said both MCA and Gerakan have to remain focused in winning back the hearts of the Chinese right from the grassroots, and first and foremost they have to find out from the community itself why they had sidelined BN during 13th General Election (GE13) and voted in favor of PKR.

"I hope that the new leadership in MCA and Gerakan will meet the grassroots to ask and listen to the people's voices. By this way even BN loses, the margin will be small.

KAJANG BY-ELECTION IS A SERIOUS MATTER

Meanwhile, UUM's Politics and International Studies lecturer Md Shukri Shuib noted that PKR should not view elections as a power play game and renege on the mandate given by the constituents.

"Is PKR contesting for Anwar or the people? If for the people, they have already given their

mandate for PKR during the 13th general election but it was wasted by its elected representative (Lee Chin Cheh) who quit giving way to Anwar.

"If they are to continue with their antics this will jeopardise the electoral system and people will lose faith in the system," he said.

WAN AZIZAH CHOSEN TO STOP INTERNAL JOSTLING

The Deputy Head of the Politics, Security and International Cluster of the National Professor Council Prof Dr Jayum Jawan noted that PKR chose Dr Wan Azizah as its candidate to avoid internal dissatisfaction if someone else was chosen to replace Anwar.

"Dr Wan Azizah is PKR's President. Therefore no one will question why it was a family affair," he said.

Jayum noted that Anwar wanted the Kajang seat to stop the bickering between Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim and PKR's Deputy President Azmin Ali.

Asked on BN's chances of winning back the Kajang state seat in the by-election, Jayum said BN could consider itself as the winner even if it reduces PKR's majority in GE13.

"What more, if BN wins it will indicate a new start for the fragile MCA," he said. - Bernama



Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun (second right) shaking hands with police personnel who cast their votes yesterday. - Bernama photo