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Abu Hassan: BN's honour restored

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KUALA SELANGOR, Thurs. - Selangor Menteri Besar-designate Datuk Abu Hassan Omar, who won the Permatang State seat tonight, said the outcome of tonight's three by-elections restored the honour and integrity of the Barisan Nasional.

He said he did not expect to win with a big majority although he defeated Pas' Mohd Maskuri Mardzuki by 7,780 votes.

Thanking his supporters for their hard work, Abu Hassan said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, now on holiday abroad, and acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had called to congratulate him.

"Although I am very tired, I don't expect to get any sleep tonight," he said in his victory speech soon after the results were announced. "I expect a stream of visitors."

Abu Hassan said Pas should not have contested the by-election as it was sure to lose.

With his victory, Abu Hassan's passage to become the next Menteri Besar of Selangor is confirmed.

The results clearly proved that the BN was still the people's first choice.

"The DAP's Teluk Intan by-election victory was a fluke," he said.

In an immediate reaction, State MCA chairman Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh said the results indicated the people's full confidence in the BN leadership.

The thumping majority of BN candidate Datuk Jamaluddin Adnan was an added boost.

"Their support will motivate Abu Hassan to push for more development to the State," he said.

MIC vice-president Datuk M. Mahalingam said the people have made a wise choice by electing BN candidates.

State Umno Youth chief Soohaimi Abdul Rahman said the results was a clear message to the Opposition that they have no place in Selangor.

People's Progressive Party president Datuk M. Kayveas said the results showed there was no doubt that the people wanted a stronger BN Government.

Deputy Human Resources Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said the results proved beyond doubt that the people support the BN.

Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamad said BN's excellent performance meant the people gave another vote of confidence to the Prime Minister for having appointed Abu Hassan as the Menteri Besar.

National Unity and Social Development Minister Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail said the results proved that the people of Kuala Selangor honour Dr Mahathir's choice.

Meanwhile, police are investigating alleged distribution of pamphlets by a group of people urging voters not to exercise their voting rights as Barisan Nasional had already won.

Several officers from the special branch swung into action after some Umno leaders informed the police and handed over a car boot-full of pamphlets allegedly printed and distributed by the group.

It is learnt that Kuala Selangor Umno leaders informed the Selangor Police Contingent's special branch division last night.

A Selangor police spokesman confirmed that they were investigating the matter but refused to comment further.

Abu Hassan told reporters that the pamphlets were found while being distributed by the group in Permatang, Ijok and Jeram.

"The pamphlets are distributed to discourage people from coming out to vote. I believe this is the tactic employed by the group to ensure that BN lose the seats or to reduce the majority," he added.

Initial investigations revealed that the group started distributing the pamphlets from yesterday evening.

Abu Hassan said apart from the distribution of the pamphlets, there were no major untoward incidents.

Kuala Selangor police chief, Superintendent Azmir Nadzri, said polling at 45 polling centres for the Kuala Selangor parliamentary and Permatang State constituencies today went smoothly.