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Teluk Intan-Anwar

TELUK INTAN DEFEAT DUE TO CHANGE IN VOTERS' MOOD- ANWAR

PULAU PINANG, May 18 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has attributed the Barisan Nasional's defeat in the Teluk Intan by-election yesterday to "change in voters' mood."

Apart from the lower voter turnout, the mood of the majority of the voters had also changed and the prevailing situation was not that pleasant.

"We accept the decision of the voters," he said after chairing a meeting of the Pulau Pinang Umno Liaison Committee here.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the change in mood and the attitude of the people in giving sympathy votes to the DAP clearly resulted in the BN defeat.

"This is a by-election, the people know the government is strong as it has two-thirds majority in Parliament and hence they gave sympathy votes to the opposition," he said.

In yesterday's by-election the BN's candidate Perak Gerakan vice chairman Dr Chee See Choke was defeated by the DAP's M. Kulasegaran by 2,916 votes.

On his appointment as Acting Prime Minister for two months from tomorrow, Anwar said he had always been acting in the position whenever Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was overseas.

"I do not think my appointment to the acting post should be an issue for in my view I am only continuing the duties just I have done in the past," he said.

"Dr Mahathir is still the Prime Minister and my duty is to continue with his duties well," Anwar said.

He said all along he had worked together with the Prime Minister and had held wide ranging discussions with him on various matters including those covering economic and political issues as well as the Multi-Media Super Corridor (MSC).

He said he fully supported the Prime Minister's idea on the MSC project.

In KUALA SELANGOR, Umno Information Chief Datuk Dr Mohd Yusof Noor said the BN's failure to retain Teluk Intan should not be allowed in any way to weaken the resolve of BN members to retain the Kuala Selangor Parliamentary seat in the coming by-election.

Nomination for the Kuala Selangor seat is on Tuesday and in the event of a contest polling will be on May 29.

According to Yusof Noor, the DAP candidate's victory in the Teluk Intan by-election "did not symbolise actual support" as only 53.22 per cent of the voters had cast their ballots.

"Compared to past elections, we find that the BN Selangor election machinery is the most organised and efficient," he said at a news conference at the Umno Office in Kuala Selangor. -- BERNAMA

AZH AAM