

19 JAN 2002  
Indera-Reaction  
BIG WIN SHOWS BN'S STRENGTH, SAY BN LEADERS

KANGAR, Jan 19 (Bernama) -- Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders have expressed satisfaction with the party's resounding win in the Indera Kayangan by-election, saying it is proof of the people's acceptance of the BN leadership.

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said BN's ability to retain the seat with a bigger majority showed that all members of MCA and other BN component parties could unite for the BN interest.

The victory proved that BN was really strong, he said.

"This shows that unity could overcome all challenges, especially in ensuring a BN victory in any election, and I hope this spirit will continue to be with us," he said.

Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said the win was a gift from the people of Perlis to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Shahidan said he was happy that the people were not influenced by the various allegations hurled against him by the opposition.

"I will cherish this victory in memory of my son who had passed away," he said.

People's Progressive Party (PPP) president Datuk M. Kayveas said he was not surprised by the increased majority because the feedback he received during campaigning showed that the people wanted the seat to remain in BN's hands.

In the by-election, BN's Oui Ah Lan beat Keadilan's Khoo Yang Chong by a 2,592-vote majority in a straight fight.

In the 1999 general election, BN's Datuk Khor Liang Tee beat Keadilan's Ko Choo Liang by a 1,974-vote majority. Khor, who was Perlis MCA chief, died of colon cancer on Dec 19 last year.

MIC President Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said BN's thumping victory should serve as a lesson to Keadilan which failed to drum up support by resorting to dirty tactics as it did in the Lunas by-election on Nov 29, 2000.

"The people know the dirty tactics used by Keadilan in Lunas before, so this time they did not support the party," he told Bernama tonight.

The Works Minister said the victory showed the people's continued support to the BN leadership of the country led by Dr Mahathir.

He said the comfortable win is also a gift to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who worked hard to ensure BN retained the seat with a higher majority.

He also said the 431 Indian voters in the constituency voted for BN.

Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib said BN's win with increased majority showed Keadilan's influence in the country was dwindling.

Initially, the party was very confident of wresting the seat from BN in this by-election, said Muhammad, who is also Umno coordinator for the by-election.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said BN's good showing in the by-election proved that the people have started to reject the opposition and instead rally behind the ruling coalition.

He said he was happy with the victory as it reflected the people's preference to the BN's continued leadership of the country.

In congratulating Oui, Khalil, who is Information Minister, said he was confident she would provide excellent service to the constituents.

MCA deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek said the party was fortunate as it had a well-oiled election machinery comprising BN component parties which paved the way for BN's victory.

"This showed the people's support for the opposition was waning as they do not have a vision to champion the people's cause," he said.

MCA Youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat said the big majority secured by Oui was surprising as it proved that the integrated effort of the BN election machinery could produce encouraging results.

"The results clearly showed the actual desire of the people in Indera Kayangan for a leadership with vision for the people and reject the opposition politics which only want to take advantage to confuse voters," he said.

Wanita MCA chief Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen said Oui's victory showed the voters in Indera Kayangan had trust and confidence in the ability of women in bearing the responsibility entrusted by the people.

"This showed the Wanita BN's exemplary leadership has been well accepted by the voters in Indera Kayangan," she said.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said BN's win with a bigger margin showed the coalition's formula was acceptable to the people.

He said the BN's decision to field a woman candidate from MCA was not a problem as the youth movement supported the move by going down to the ground to drum up support.

"The higher majority bears testimony to the people's rejection of the opposition ploys," he said.

Puteri Umno pro tem head Azalina Othman Said said the victory showed the people accepted the BN's agenda for peace and unity among Malaysia's multi-racial society.

She said the opportunity to participate in the by-election campaigning provided an experience to the movement to contribute effectively in future elections.

Rural Development Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid said BN's victory reflected the Malays' growing trust and confidence in BN and Umno.

He said the victory gave the courage to Perlis BN to make a clean sweep of all the 15 seats in the State Legislative Assembly in the 2004 general election.

At present, three seats in the 15-member state legislature are held by PAS.

Perlis MIC chief S. Vengadasamy said he was satisfied with the Indians' support for BN which helped in securing a bigger majority.

Perlis Wanita Umno chief Mastika Junaidah Hussin said the victory was a meaningful success to the women in the state.

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