

## **Bersih 3.0 impact may last four months**

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**By Hafiz Yatim**

The chief executive officer of think-tank Centre for Strategic Engagement (Cense), Fui K Soong, has warned that the Bersih 3.0 impact may last up to four months or more.

Fui, who was one of the panellists at the 'Politics and Voters Perception in the 13th General Election' forum held yesterday at Universiti Malaya, said she is basing her assumption on the first Bersih rally of November 2007.

"The general election was held on March 8, 2008 and it led to a political tsunami resulting in Barisan Nasional's biggest loss ever. With this, I expect that the Bersih 3.0 rally two weeks ago to have a similar impact," said Fui (*left*).

As such, according to her, having nationwide polls in June would not be best for BN and Prime Minister Najib Razak.

Fui's suggestion is for the general election to be called after the tabling of the Budget in September.

"With Ramadan expected on July 21, and Hari Raya in August and Hari Raya Haji expected on Oct 26, the best month will be September - after the tabling of the 2013 Budget.

"But do not be surprised if the 13<sup>th</sup> general election is held during the November monsoon season," she said.

Najib has until April 28, 2013 to dissolve Parliament.

Fui said that most Chinese voters felt that Chinese-based parties such as the MCA, Gerakan and Sarawak-based SUPP had failed to represent their interests in the ruling coalition, and the community seems to increasingly feel that the DAP is better at shouldering that responsibility.

She also warned that the DAP and Pakatan Rakyat can be expected to launch an electoral assault in Johor, similar to what they had pulled off up north at the 2008 general election and made major inroads in Penang, Perak and Kedah.

"That is the natural progression as besides Selangor, Johor has the most number of mixed seats in the country," said Fui, who previously helmed MCA think-tank Institute of Strategic Analysis and Policy Research (Insap).

Fui noted that the number of Chinese Malaysians who turned out to support of the Bersih 3.0 rally two weeks ago was much bigger than previous rallies.

She also warned that the well-worn tactics employed by the BN to spook non-Muslim voters with PAS' hudud law is unlikely to work this time because the Chinese have become more politically savvy.

### **Indians return to BN fold**

Influential blogger and political analyst Mohd Sayuti Omar said Najib's 1Malaysia assistance scheme of RM500 may not translate into votes for the prime minister.

This, he said, was because the recipients are not likely to be influenced by the cash handouts to throw their support for the ruling coalition.

Mohd Sayuti provided an anecdotal evidence to back his assertion.

"I went to my hometown in Rantau Panjang (in Kelantan) to ask whether there was anyone who had not received the RM500 assistance, and their reply was no one.

"Indeed, I was disappointed when they said no one as I wanted to do a story of those who did not benefit from this handout.

"They also told me they were going to organise a thanksgiving ceremony, and when I asked for what, they replied that it was to make sure Tok Guru Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat remains the menteri besar," he said.

Mohd Sayuti also pointed out that the people want candidates with integrity and not those afflicted by four negative traits.

These are politicians who like to indulge in speculation, manipulate others, and those who invite controversy and are hypocrites.

Meanwhile, Malay daily *Sinar Harian's* G Manimaran, who was also a panellist at the discussion organised by Universiti Malaya Centre for Democracy and Elections (UMCEDEL), acknowledged that the Indian vote is turning back to the BN.

"There were not many Indians at the Bersih 3.0. I would say 40 to 45 percent of the Indian community would support the BN government as a result of Najib's reforms," he said.