

## **Mysterious 'polls campaign' blitz kicks off**

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While speculation is rife that the next general election may be called as soon as September, a mysterious election campaign blitz, believed to be linked to BN and estimated to cost millions of ringgit, is making its way across all media platforms.

Starting last week, half-page and full-page colour advertisements have been taken out in all mainstream newspapers, as well as slotted into advertisements during prime time of all major TV channels.

The campaign, dubbed 'Saya Pilih Malaysia' (I Choose Malaysia), however does not explicitly express inclination to any political party.

Nevertheless, its colour theme - dark blue and white - coupled with the keywords highlighted in the advertisements - peace, progress, stability and unity - resonate well with the BN ruling coalition.

The promotion of the 'Saya Pilih Malaysia' Facebook fan page by Media Umno Malaysia, the ruling party's online organ, is another sign that the campaign is linked to BN.

According to the fan page, the campaign has published two parts of an advertisement series in all four major languages in key newspapers.

The second part appeared in yesterday's newspapers, including Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia, New Straits Times and The Star.

According to the advertisement, its next message will be on TV channels, namely RTM1, RTM2, TV3, 8TV, TV9, NTV7, Astro RIA, Astro Awani, Astro Vaanavil and Astro AEC.

Whoever is behind this publicity blitz must have deep pockets as all these advertisements in printed and electronic media will easily cost millions of ringgit.

Prominent Malaysian faces included

To date, four professionally-produced footage have been published in the campaign's Facebook fan page and some of them have been aired on TV since last Friday.

Prominent figures featured in the footage include former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, national astronaut Dr Faiz Khaleed, celebrities such as pop queen Siti Nurhaliza, actress Lisa Surihani, sports commentator Hasbullah Awang, pop band Hujan and singers Aizat Amdan and Reshmonu.

Their scripts in the footage contain subtle political messages such as "Maintaining our nation's peace and progress", "From the past until now, it has been proven that our

economic stability is advancing” and “We should be grateful for what we have achieved today”.

All the footage share one common message: “I choose to vote”, but it does not indicate which party to vote for.

Besides the advertisements, the Facebook fan page has also launched a contest that will give winners tickets to watch the July 30 friendly match between the national football team and Manchester City.

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