

## **Pakatan would've won under proportional system**

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**By Aidila Razak**

Pakatan Rakyat would have won the 13th general election with a total of 114 parliamentary seats out of 222 if Malaysia uses the proportional voting system, according to political scientist Wong Chin Huat.

Presenting this view at a Bar Council forum today, he said the mixed-member proportional voting system allows almost perfect correlation between popular vote and seats.

To illustrate his point, Wong produced a simulation of the how the general election outcome would have been under a similar system - the party list-proportional representation (list-PR).

constituencies delineation forum 080613 wong chin huatWong (left) said that assuming that voters had voted for the same party under the list-PR, PAS would have taken 33 seats, PKR, 46 and the DAP, 35, pushing the total number ahead of the BN's 106.

Star and Sarawak Workers Party would have also won a seat each.

"Even if west and east Malaysia are made two constituencies, with the same formula, Pakatan will still win 110, the BN 109, Star 2 and SWP 1," he said.

In the list-PR, parties make lists of candidates to be elected, and seats get allocated to each party in proportion to the number of votes the party receives. The MPs taking up the seats are selected by the party.

Instead, he said, Malaysia uses the first-past-the-post system which even if constituencies are perfectly apportioned, allows a party or coalition to claim victory with only slightly more than 25 percent popular votes.

"To win, you have to get a little more than half of the seats, and to win each seat you have to win a little more than half of the votes there," he explained.

In a mixed-member proportional (MMP) system, a voter has two votes, one for the constituency representation and another for the party.

A parliament in the MMP system consists of the half constituency MPs and half

party-list MPs.

It is used in several countries, including Germany, and involves a more complicated method of determining which candidate will represent each constituency in an assembly.

This system was first used in Germany and later also adopted by New Zealand in 1994. New Zealand first used the 'first past the post' system like Malaysia.

Disparity between east and west

Wong, who is also part of electoral reform group Bersih, said that even if Malaysia remains on the first-past-the-post system, it is possible to put in measures to limit fraud.

Among them are to limit intra-state malapportionment and to seek judicial reviews of constituencies which are disproportionately bigger than others.

He also urged negotiation with East Malaysian states in order to minimise disparity between constituencies between the east and the west.

"With one sixth of the electorate, East Malaysia controls 25 percent of parliamentary seats.

"They say it's a legacy issue and that they will not give that away until they can ensure a better deal so the states won't be more marginalised than now.

"But any right-thinking East Malaysian can see that the system is not working now, even if they still have this to threaten Kuala Lumpur," he said.

According to the agreement for the formation of Malaysia in 1963, Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore should have a total 34 percent of parliamentary seats.

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