

BN retains Kuala Besut with bigger majority

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After 12 days of campaigning, the Kuala Besut by-election campaign has come to a close.

Although the results were only announced at about 10.20pm, both parties seemed to know early on that BN had won.

Below are our earlier "LIVE" reports on the results based on unofficial tallying by both parties.

LIVE REPORT

10.35pm: QUICK ANALYSIS - As it turns out, the result saw pretty much status quo in terms of BN's majority.

BN, which its usual style of development-themed campaigning, once again triumphed, while PAS opted for a couple of new strategies.

NONEBut observers had already pointed out that the "16:16" campaign was flawed and had little merits. BN's counter-campaign, however, was more palatable.

The ruling coalition sowed concern in the hearts of voters that a deadlock in the number of state seats would lead to instability in the state administration.

Furthermore, PAS also shot itself in the foot by harping alleged land grab by BN, which again led to tables being turned on them.

The party leaders had accused Umno elected reps of having been awarded beachfront lands but were left red-faced when it was revealed that a PAS state assemblyperson and his wife also received large plots of land when PAS was in power.

Following this, PAS toned down its attack but the damage had been done.

Apart from these two factors, BN's pledge to develop the state constituency, with projects crossing the RM350 million mark.

10.30pm: BN's majority increased by 158 votes, or 1.1 percent of the total voter

turnout.

Although it sounds pretty negligible, one must keep in mind that there was a 7 percent drop in the turnout since GE13.

PAS won two out of nine polling districts (including early voting) in GE13 but lost all this time round.

10.20pm: IT'S OFFICIAL - BN's Tengku Zaihan Che ku Abd Rahman is the new Kuala Besut state assemblyperson.

NONEHe polled 8,288 votes. PAS' Azlan Yusof polled 5,696 votes.

BN's majority is 2,592.

This means that BN had increased its majority by 158 votes.

10.00pm: BN deputy chief Muhyiddin Yassin, looking victorious, leads the BN delegation into the tally centre.

9.00pm: PAS central committee member Dzulkefly Ahmad says PAS was the underdog because BN had "camped" in Kuala Besut and they had a 2,434 vote "advantage".

"They pledged RM477 million. But I think they only increased their majority by 200 votes," he said.

However, he does not consider the 16:16 strategy to be a mistake.

"We explained it clearly. People understood it, but did not vote for us. They (succumbed to) inducements, threats and other matters.

"And, this polling was done on a week day. Voters from out of town could now come back," he said.

8.45pm: QUICK ANALYSIS - Ahmad Said has redeemed himself after suffering Terengganu BN had a poor showing during GE13 and losing Kuala Terengganu during a by-election in 2009.

However, Idris Jusoh's "4,000 majority" boast will remain just that.

As for PAS, its vice-president Husam Musa, the party's main campaign chief, has

suffer yet another dent to his colourful career after losing the contest for Putrajaya during GE13.

8.40pm: The turnout rate is 80 percent, which is a bit lower than 87 percent during GE13.

8.30pm: QUICK ANALYSIS - Initially, PAS' national leaders had worked on big issues - the 16:16 formula and land grabs.

When it was clear that such issues were not gaining traction, the national leaders became less visible while the party's campaign took a page out of BN's book by holding 'mesra rakyat' carnivals, lucky draw events and even a free petrol event.

On the other hand, BN had been pretty consistent in their tried and tested "development politics" strategy. The large extended family of the BN candidate is also said to have some influence.

8.25pm: Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor has already tweeted BN had won by sweeping all the polling districts.

8.13pm: Based on PAS' unofficial tally, it seems that BN has a 2,599 vote lead. One more polling station left to go.

If all things remain equal, BN will win with a bigger majority.

7.50pm: Both BN and PAS camps are breaking fast and are not as excited as usual about the results.

The BN camp are at Demong Resort - a four-star hotel. Deputy BN chief Muhyiddin Yassin, Terengganu Menteri Besar Ahmad Said and Besut Umno division chief Idris Jusoh are in attendance.

As for PAS, they are at their headquarters in Kampung Baharu. After breaking fast, some 100 PAS members conducted prayers.

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