

Survey: PM, BR1M, 1MDB failed to woo voters

MalaysiaKini.com

May 22, 2015

By Alyaa Azhar

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's leadership, Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) and 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) did not manage to woo Permatang Pauh voters.

Sixty-three percent of respondents in a survey conducted by Selangor government's think-tank Institut Darul Ehsan (IDE) replied with "no" when asked whether Najib's leadership managed to push for support for BN in the May 7 by-election.

Only 25 percent out of the 1,075 respondents replied "yes" while 12 percent of those surveyed were unsure.

IDE deputy chairperson Mohammad Redzuan Othman (photo) said Najib was proven to be unpopular in the by-election especially when there were no pictures of him on BN's posters.

"There were no images of him with the BN's candidate (Suhaimi Sabudin), either," he said in a dialogue session titled "Permatang Pauh by-election and the future of Malaysian politics" at Universiti Selangor (Unisel) today.

Redzuan added the survey found that BR1M too could not be used to garner support for BN as 51 percent of those polled said "no" while only 17 percent said "yes".

As for the debt-ridden 1MDB, respondents were asked whether the state investment fund would lead them to support BN because it stabilises the economy.

More than half of the respondents at 51 percent said "no" while only 17 percent said "yes".

Meanwhile, Redzuan in his presentation today said he believes if news of Lembaga Tabung Haji's purchase of 1MDB land had come out during the by-election campaign period, the result would have turned out differently.

"If the issue was played out a week before, the results would have been different," he said.

Dr M's 'quit, Najib' call also played a role

As for former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's calls for Najib to resign as prime minister, Redzuan said this also played a role in the result of the by-election.

"It is normal for the opposition to criticise Najib. But when it is Mahathir who criticises him, the situation becomes different," he said.

Based on two surveys conducted by IDE, the initial survey done before nominations found

55 percent of respondents saying "yes" while only 33 percent said "no" to whether Mahathir's calls for Najib's head would have an impact on the by-election or otherwise.

The second survey conducted on May 3 showed the percentage rising for those who replied with "yes", from 55 percent to 63 percent.

Another speaker at the session, Unisel's Education and Social Science Faculty lecturer Hamdan Mohammad Salleh (photo), noted how there were no images of Najib on BN's posters during the campaign period.

"Back in the 2008 Permatang Pauh by-election, there were many posters of BN candidate Arif Shah Omar Shah beside then prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"This time around, even the Umno flag was not placed beside the BN logo.

"There were more of Mahathir's pictures than Najib's so much so that I don't even know who is the prime minister now," Hamdan joked.

He said Mahathir appeared to be more "popular" as there were several posters bearing his face on electric poles throughout the constituency.

Both Najib and Mahathir continue to trade barbs at each other at every opportunity they get. Mahathir maintains his call for Najib's resignation, raising Najib's brainchild 1MDB, among others.

However, Najib insists he has the support of Umno to continue as party president and the country's prime minister.