

Teething problems in Perak elections
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PKR's move to implement direct elections may be the nation's first, but it is clear there are numerous teething problems.

For example, a Perak party source told *Malaysiakini* yesterday that it faced low turnout at the AGMs due to lack of publicity, logistics problems, and insufficient notification of the divisional elections.

The turnout has been as low as 10 to 15 percent as at the Pasir Salak division election yesterday, where party state chief Mustaffa Kamil Ayub lost the seat to Osman Abdul Rahman a former Pasir Salak division chief, by only 17 votes.

This PKR division has about 1,550 members but only 205 voters turned up with Osman taking 111 votes to Mustaffa's 94 votes.



An optimistic Mustaffa had told *Malaysiakini* earlier that he has every chance of winning but the low voter turnout apparently did him in.

Likewise the PKR Gopeng division that has 2017 party members, saw only a voter turnout of only 331. The winner was incumbent Lee Boon Chye (*left*) with a big majority of 284 while his opponent, state party secretary Anuar Zakaria, got only 47 votes.

Anuar had banked on the party's large number of Malay voters in the division would turn up to support him but it turned out otherwise.

Low voter turnout was also recorded in the other division elections of Tapah, Lumut, Bagan Datoh, Teluk Intan and Tanjung Malim.

'Turnout not unhealthy'

Meanwhile, Lee said that a 15 percent turnout for the party's pioneer direct voting system in the country is all right when the teething problems were taken into account.

He compared the turnout of party members to that of Umno elections which he alleged was as low as 5 percent. Even the Bar Council's AGM suffered from low turnout, he pointed out.

He agreed that party members needed to be get used to this new voting procedure and that the logistic problems also have to be ironed out.

As for the lack of proper notification to members on the division elections, he said that the members' home addresses needed to be updated as many members have shifted and could not be reached in time.

