

BN parties need to redefine 'youth'
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Malaysia is one of the countries where the participation of youth in politics is extremely low. It is a known fact that the current young voters in our country favour the opposition Pakatan Rakyat. The reasons are quite obvious.

In Barisan Nasional, most of the youth leaders for its component parties are extremely old. The general age limit for a youth member in BN component parties is 45 years old. Except for the current Umno youth chief (Khairy Jamaluddin), other youth chiefs of BN component parties are reaching the age limit of 45 years old.

It is not surprising that BN has completely lost touch with the young voters. The current needs and feelings of the young voters are obviously not understood by someone who is reaching the age of 45 years old.

In my humble opinion, 'youth' means someone that is below 40 years old.

We can see that PKR had made adjustments to reach out to the young voters. They have even reduced the age limit for their youth membership and leadership to 35 years old. It is no surprise that the trend now is for the young voters to support Pakatan Rakyat.

The previous attempts by Umno to reach out to young voters through 'Putera' has been a failure. The age limit of Putera was 30 years old but their leaders were more than 40 years. Their leaders had a totally different wavelength from their target audience.

In the end, Putera was known at that time to be supporters of the 'Mat Rempit'. Now, it is but a defunct organ of Umno.

As a supporter of Barisan Nasional, I would hope that the top leaders in Barisan Nasional will take steps to redefine the meaning of 'youth' in their component parties. I would suggest that the age limit of youth membership be reduced to below 40 years old if Barisan Nasional wants to stand any chance in attracting the support of the young voters in future.

At this moment, there is not really any sincere effort by Barisan Nasional to capture the support of young voters. The youth sections in Barisan Nasional remain but a rhetoric to young Malaysians.