

PKR polls: Smooth sailing at 'problematic' divisions
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PKR's supreme council polls in Selangor today has appeared to be relatively trouble-free, after a weeks of claims that the process was being marred by irregularities.

A visit to four polling centres - for the Kapar, Petaling Jaya Selatan, Subang and Kota Raja divisions - saw orderly and quiet polling.

subang pkr polling 141110 lining upThe four divisions were expected to be 'problematic' based on the first round of elections held late September that saw major disruptions during the polling process for divisional leaders.

And unlike other divisions over the past weeks, Malaysiakini has not detected any claims of inadequate security, insufficient ballot papers or abuses.

"We have already learned from the last time, so we are well prepared. All the accusations and complaints actually helped us prepare," said Kapar division chief Mohd Bakir Abdul Wahab.

"Everything was ready and proceeded smoothly. As long as we are properly briefed on what to expect, we can prepare for it," he said.

kapar pkr polling 141110 gateSeveral Peoples Volunteer Corps (Rela) members were spotted at the polling centre for the Kapar division at the Dewan Sungai Pinang to provide security.

Campaign workers were allowed to canvass for votes and distribute 'preferred candidate' lists to voters outside the compounds of the polling centres.

Learnt from mistakes

Voting began at 10am for the Kota Raja and Petaling Jaya Selatan divisions but technical problems caused minor delays for the Kapar and Subang divisions, that began polling at 10.40am.

kapar pkr polling 141110 manivasagam mustaffaSeveral candidates for the supreme council were seen making their rounds of the polling centres such as deputy president candidate Mustafa Kamil Ayub and three vice-president candidates R Sivarasa, Tian Chua and S Manikavasagam.

The press were allowed access to all the polling centers except in Kota Raja, where they were barred from the actual voting hall due to concern over video footage that had gotten out during the last round's incidents.

When met later, Kapar division's Manikavasagam said that they had similarly learnt from the past mistakes to ensure sufficient Rela personnel, party election officials and volunteers to help manage the centre.

"Kapar is fine, it is peaceful," said Manikavasagam when met.

He explained that the problems faced in Kapar in the September polls were caused by the unexpected high turnout of nearly 5,500 members, leading to congestion and altercations.

"Now we know, we have asked them to come in stages, by the hour. Some at 1pm, some at 2pm and others at 3pm," he said.

He admitted that some people were still afraid to show up because of the ruckus that had broken out during the last polls, but he said he had worked hard to assure more people to come to vote.

Under 10% turnout

Meanwhile polling in nearby Kota Raja, that saw fistfights break out during the September divisional polls, was peaceful.

Held at the Shah Alam City Council hall in Seksyen 32, the division saw the highest turnout of the four visited.

kapar pkr polling 141110 registryThe polling for the Subang division was conducted at the Damansara Multipurpose Hall while the Petaling Jaya Selatan division, that is holding both divisional and national leadership polls, conducted polling at the Petaling Jaya hockey stadium.

Central election committee official Abdul Aziz Jakim, when met at the Subang polling station, said that all was going smoothly adding that the turnout was lukewarm.

At the close of today's polls, Kota Raja saw a turnout of 658 out of about 7,992 members, while Kapar saw only 297 out of 5,484 members show up. Turnout at the other two divisions were also reportedly below the 10 percent mark.

Those who did turn up to vote did not seem to have any complaints, and seemed to be enjoying the festive atmosphere as they came dressed in their best and enjoyed the free food and beverage provided.

PKR has come under heavy criticism over alleged irregularities in the ongoing polls, and more allegations were initially expected this weekend as Selangor divisions began voting.

Selangor has the highest number of PKR members in the country, and campaigning was touted to be the most heated as candidates were expected use the this opportunity to make up for any lost ground from the previous weeks.