

Seven reasons why BN lost big
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The results are conclusive: Anwar has won the Permatang Pauh parliamentary by-election. Let me just say that there was no way BN could have won this by-election. However, the following are the seven factors many ordinary citizens like me feel could have prevented BN from even reducing PKR's majority:
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1. Racist style of campaigning notably using Arif's ability to converse in Chinese dialects and Arif distastefully declaring himself the Monkey God, insultingly offering scrap metal dealership to Indian constituents, using Lee Chong Wei as an example that the government does not discriminate against the Chinese in sport and scaring the Malays that Anwar would sell out their rights.

The BN leadership (especially Umno leaders) also did not rebuke those who made derogatory remarks like 'babi, balik cina', the infamous 'Indian snake' remark by Hamidah Osman in parliament and the recent racist remarks against Indian students by a teacher.

2. Bringing in so-called big guns that are disliked by the people like Wira Ali Rustam, Khairy and Samy Vellu.

3. Questionable coincidences - Anwar being charged shortly after he announces his decision to contest, Saiful swearing on the Quran with the mainstream media carrying it as headline news one day before nomination. Lee Chong Wei 'coincidentally' posing with Arif Shah against the backdrop of election banners.

4. Nallakaruppan & Ezam - one bragged he has five recordings and the other has six boxes full of evidence and though neither produced any evidence, they went ahead with their smear campaign against Anwar anyway.

5. Saiful and the sodomy smear campaign - The voters, not to mention the whole nation, were disgusted with his actions that were aired over and over again over prime time TV while the footage was played over and over again at Permatang Pauh at BN ceramah.

Not to mention well-known personalities taking distasteful potshots and challenging Anwar to swear on the Quran as well even though he has stated time and again his reason for not doing so.

This was done despite opinion polls clearly indicating that most people did not believe the allegations.

6. Offering development funds - This is especially insulting after the federal government drastically cut funding to Penang despite Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng's many appeals after the federal government reneged on its pledges after GE12.

Umno also did not rebuke certain Penang Umno factions for asking the government to punish the voters and as they say silence is often taken as a sign of complicity, thus this campaign strategy backfired.

7. Campaign drive - While Anwar campaigned on the grounds of justice, equality and an end to corrupt practices, the BN campaign was largely seen as a 'smear Anwar campaign'.

Najib was also quoted on Umno's website as saying "The sodomy issue is more relevant at the national level but not in Permatang Pauh". Nothing can be further than the truth.

Permatang Pauh with its 70% Malay, 25% Chinese and 6% Indian ethnic makeup almost mimics the macro ethnic national make-up.

I am willing to wager that if snap polls are called tomorrow, the BN government will collapse like a house of cards.

The real fear is not Anwar changing the federal government via crossovers of BN MPs. The real worry is Umno playing racist politics to the hilt when they are out of power as they have shown time and again to be sore losers.

My appeal to all citizens is not to become pawns of politicians who lack talent but make up for it by stoking dangerous racist sentiments.

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