

Kedah Umno, BN Must Overcome Issue Of Candidates And Sabotage To Achieve Win Bernama

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ALOR SETAR, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Kedah Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN) must overcome the issue of candidates and sabotage if they want to win in the coming 13th general election.

Political analyst, Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani said the victory of the opposition pact in the last general election in 2008 was largely due to sabotage by leaders and members of Umno.

"Umno and BN must worry about the issue of candidates and sabotage. Although the issue is not so obvious after the recent Umno general assembly, it might emerge during the coming general election," said the dean of Universiti Utara Malaysia's International Studies Faculty.

"What Umno and BN can do is to announce the names of the candidates early and probably also the name of the individual to be appointed as Menteri Besar if BN wins.

"Time is short, if the announcement is made during the general election. An early announcement will give Umno and BN time and space to check sabotage. There is time to plan. It is all connected to the perception of the people. There is no problem with hardcore supporters but with the fence-sitters, especially the young," he said.

Meanwhile, Kedah Umno Liaison Committee chairman Datuk Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah said it was time for all leaders to do something extraordinary if they wanted to wrest back the state.

He said Umno leaders must also walk the talk to place party interest above individual interest including supporting the candidates picked.

"Go to the ground and tell the party members that they should place the party first. Talk from the heart...we cannot say one thing and mean something else.

"Say we are willing to accept anything. Say we will support anybody fielded as candidate so that the party wins. With the candidates selected, we must campaign hard and seriously," he told Bernama, here.

The issue of candidates is a critical matter for Umno, to the extent that Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak when winding up the debate on the final day of the recent general assembly, threw a "jackpot" question to test the level of preparedness of members in supporting the party if they were not picked as candidates.

Five possibilities were put forward by Najib to answer the question which contained the pertinent message -- fully support the candidates selected by the party, support, don't work, sabotage or jump party.

Some days ago, former prime minister and ex-Umno president Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged Umno members to do away with disgruntlement over candidates chosen by the party if they wished to see Umno and BN remain in power and form a strong government after the 13th general election.

Ahmad Bashah said to change the thinking of Umno members over the matter of candidates was tough, but efforts must still be made to change this negative attitude and that it was not impossible.

He said while the internal problems in Kedah Umno were no longer serious now, he received good response from the people that they would give their support back to Umno and BN.

"They have felt for themselves in the past five years. This is not hearsay, but it comes from the people and voters themselves.

"In the last general election, they only wanted to reduce BN's win but it turned out that BN lost (Kedah). Many were shocked including the Chinese and Indians. But they still have faith in BN. The Chinese and Indians can see who can actually rule," he said.

"It is indeed a huge loss if Umno leaders cannot see the chaotic situation in the Pakatan Rakyat state government. If in that situation today, we cannot take back Kedah, don't ever dream we can do it in other general elections."

Ahmad Bashah is confident that Kedah BN can win 25 or 26 seats of the 36 state assembly seats.

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