

BN's polls slump a 'Malaysian tsunami', ex-NSTP boss says
Malaysian Insider
May 6, 2013

KUALA LUMPUR, May 6 — Barisan Nasional's (BN) weaker showing in Election 2013 points to a strong wave of rejection from all Malaysians and not just from the minority Chinese, a former editor of the Umno-owned New Straits Times said today.

Datuk A. Kadir Jasin observed that the 13-party coalition not only drew fewer seats in the 222-member Dewan Rakyat and 12 state assemblies in yesterday's general election compared to 2008, but also lost the popular vote for the first time since polls in 1969.

"Is it not possible that this is not a Chinese tsunami or racial chauvinism but a Malaysian tsunami that is centred on the aspiration and new reality, especially among young voters?" the man who had been group editor-in-chief of the public-listed News Strait Times Press during the Mahathir administration wrote in his blog.

BN chairman Datuk Seri Najib Razak had alluded to a "Chinese tsunami" in an immediate speech just after midnight when the Election Commission announced the BN as winners by a simple majority, but the veteran journalist today brushed aside the perception as unlikely.

Kadir highlighted that BN took a severe beating this round and bled more seats at both the federal and state levels compared to 2008, leaving it with only 133 federal seats and 274 out of the 505 total state seats despite wresting back Kedah from the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) pact.

It also prevented Perak from falling back to PR, but nearly lost Terengganu and was forced to cede many seats in Johor, the birthplace of anchor party Umno and the state it considered a vote bank.

He also noted that despite the three-party PR alliance's failure to nab Putrajaya, it succeeded in enlarging its presence in Dewan Rakyat.

The DAP, PKR and PAS union won 89 federal seats compared to the 82 it had in hand previously.

Kadir cautioned the newly-sworn prime minister and the latter's coalition against feeling proud of their achievements or being stubborn when carrying out necessary reforms.

"Najib was stunned by the decision and promised change to his Umno party. But the BN performance that was worse than in 2008 has made his position wobbly," he warned.

He also advised the PR pact to accept their loss graciously, and to resolve their disputes through legal channels instead of resorting to street protests.

The BN succeeded in keeping its 56-year unbroken grip on federal power for another five-year term, but allegations of vote-buying and electoral fraud were among other voter irregularities that have cast a shadow on Najib's administration.

His rival for the prime ministership, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, has questioned the legitimacy of the BN mandate, which he claimed was obtained fraudulently in yesterday's

polls and vowed to challenge the results.

Election watchdog Bersih also said it will withhold recognition of BN's victory until they have verified reports of electoral fraud.

Malaysia's voter turnout hit an all-time high of 80 per cent according to the Election Commission.

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