

BN Has To Intensify 'Attacks' Via Social Media To Correct Public Perception
Bernama
14 May, 2013

KUALA LUMPUR, May 14 (Bernama) - Barisan Nasional (BN) must intensify 'attacks' and extend its social media reach to correct the perception of young voters who have been misled by the opposition.

Public relations specialist and social science analyst, Prof Datuk Dr Hamdan Adnan said the efforts must start now in a concerted and organised manner with clear messages coordinated by an agency.

The 13th general election (GE13) shows that the social media played a very important and effective role in influencing voters, particularly the young.

"Mature, first time and young voters who accounted for about 40 percent of the 3.2 million registered voters during GE13 had to some extent been influenced by a slew of information via social media websites.

"From my observation, BN lagged behind in leveraging social media whereas it is very important as many people no longer read mainstream newspapers, watch TV and listen to radio," he said in an interview with Bernama here Tuesday.

Hamdan said this is especially true for university students who will be voting in the 14th general election (GE14).

"If BN's success story is not clearly delivered to them, how are they to understand and get involved in nation building?

He said the opposition could not be blamed for taking full advantage of information communication technology to deliver their message.

"Being the opposition, their messages and information are unethical, libelous and full of lies in line with the goal to grab power."

As an educated generation, the young should be able to distinguish between the truth and lies and not believe the opposition political propaganda.

Hamdan said this is why in marketing and consumerism, every message is delivered repeatedly as it will eventually be believed and accepted as true.

A good example was the spread of 'blackout' at the counting centre for Bentong parliamentary seat despite denial by the losing candidate and Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB).

"Many people believed it and spread it further so much so the denials were ignored. The perception of the government was very negative during GE13."

"Such political propaganda must be dealt with firmly and immediately. BN must have a dedicated social media team to explain and deliver correct information fast."

The BN social media should be run by strategists and full-time employees as four years is

not long, especially when the government focus on fulfilling promises in its manifesto.

"Human resources need to be trained to compete with salaried opposition social media workers. Let the BN virtual soldiers focus on issues in cyberspace and convey accurate information."

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v7/newsindex.php?id=949651>