

PKR Youth targets rural Malaysia as party prepares for GE14
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PETALING JAYA, May 24 — PKR Youth wing (AMK) will begin its preparation for the 14th general election immediately and will focus on infiltrating Barisan Nasional's (BN) strongholds in rural Malaysia, its leader Syamsul Iskandar Akin said today.

AMK will also pour much of its resources on wooing young rural women's support after a survey found majority of the demographic have shun Pakatan Rakyat (PR), added the newly-elected Bukit Katil MP.

"Young women, especially those living in the rural and urban outskirts, are yet to receive a clear information on the message of change. This must be improved," he said in his opening speech at the wing's 9th national congress here.

"Secondly, Program AMK Masuk Kampung (AMK Into The Countryside programme). A post-GE13 research indicate a voting polarisation between urban and rural areas. As I have stated just now, the issue remains the same: access to information to the rural community".

Syamsul, a lawyer by train, said AMK will begin what he termed as "guerilla marketing" in the rural constituencies that will focus on disseminating information to voters in these areas.

The programme will come hand-in-hand with the wing's campaign to "democratise information" as the party saw weaknesses in its ability to promote PR's successes in states under its rule to voters outside urban areas.

"Hence, the need to strengthen AMK's information machinery together with the campaign to democratise information. This is specifically to organise the political marketing work among society, strengthen smart relations between AMK, information machinery, bloggers and others," he said.

A recent survey released showed PR had won in 59 mixed-race federal seats, almost double its 30 wins in Chinese-majority seats in Malaysia's Election 2013, debunking BN claim of a "Chinese Tsunami" that cost it more losses.

Independent online research house PoliTweet.org also said the ruling BN gained most of its votes from rural federal seats while PR increased its support from urban and semi-urban areas in the South-east Asian nation chasing developed nation status by 2020.

"BN represents the rural majority and can retain power with rural and semi-urban seats alone. This election highlighted PR's weak areas which are rural seats, Bumiputra Sabah majority and Bumiputra Sarawak majority seats," said the report, which can be found on PoliTweet's official blog.

BN retained power with 133 seats while PR bagged 89. In the peninsula, the ruling coalition edged its rivals with a four seat margin which indicates PR's growing influence in the semi-urban and rural areas.

Most of BN's majority seats came from the interiors of Sabah and Sarawak where PR have

found it difficult to campaign in given its weak resources.

PKR's ally the DAP had recently said it would prepare a working plan to infiltrate's BN fortress state of Sabah as it aims to win federal power in five years time.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had said before that the battle for Malaysia will be won in the country's interiors and the Malay heartlands.

Among others, Syamsul also said the party's youth wing will strengthen its working relations with existing NGOs in a bid to increase its presence in the rural constituencies.

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