

## **Accept polls defeat graciously and stop protests, BN leaders tell Anwar and Pakatan**

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**By Ida Lim and Md Izwan**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 26 – Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders have told Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Pakatan Rakyat (PR) to accept their polls defeat graciously and stop protesting, saying that the federal opposition that he leads should start working together with the ruling coalition for the country's wellbeing.

Umno's Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak claimed that Anwar's statement of refusal to work with the EC was "politically motivated for his own political agenda".

"Who is he to call EC to resign? They have been appointed to their position through the process of law. He has no business to make that kind of remark," the Sabah Umno deputy liaison chief said.

Salleh said Anwar (picture) should contribute to the country in his role as the Opposition Leader, instead of ignoring the principles of democracy, further reminding the PKR de facto leader not to "instill politics of revolt and hatred" among the younger generation.

"He should accept defeat and continue to play his role as opposition leader by giving constructive views or criticisms. Election Commission has conducted a good job and if there any dissatisfaction by any candidates, surely they can file petition which are provided within our system," the Sabah state assembly speaker told The Malaysian Insider today.

PR will be filing their election petitions to protest elections results in over 25 seats, a move which must be done within 21 days of the gazette of the polls results on May 22.

Former Umno minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah also disagreed with PR's call for the EC to step down now, saying that a new line-up can be appointed after the election petitions are settled within six months of filing.

"Based on the reports of GE13 observers, GE13 has proceeded well and smoothly. They said there's important matters that have to be improved. Based on this, I disagree with requests for the EC chairman and his team to resign.

"I am more interested for, after this, EC to be placed directly under Parliament, and as soon as GE13 petition is completed, a new line-up of chairman and EC members are appointed," Saifuddin said, likely referring to a proposal by PR for the EC to be moved away from the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's Department.

Two other BN leaders noted that citizens are already getting tired of PR's focus on the 13th general elections' results and want to move on.

When saying this, MIC treasurer-general Datuk Jaspal Singh suggested that Anwar work together with BN to make the country better instead.

"When I go around the country, people are over GE13, people have accepted the results... Everybody wants to move forward," he said, suggesting that some of those in the protesting crowd at different rallies were the same people.

"I think the fact that Pakatan can win so many seats this time shows elections is quite fair," he said, later adding that both sides should accept the results and seek to improve their performance.

MIC's former secretary-general Datuk S. Murugesan said Anwar was putting his personal interests above the country's interest, describing it as an act similar to politicians from third-world countries.

"I think casting aspersion on Election Commission, trying to bypass the system which is already there is really uncalled for. It's not for the benefit of the country.

"He's acting typically like a third-world politician when they lose, they don't graciously accept the defeat and move on," Murugesan said.

When asked about the planned protest by PR in EC offices to push their demands, Murugesan said they should bring it up in Parliament instead.

"They have MPs in Parliament, why don't they raise up in Parliament and debate in Parliament like all civilised democracies? What is the point of having Parliament and election if every time you have a demand, you go to streets?" he asked.

"People are already fatigued by the political fighting that he's brought about," he said, before saying that Anwar should try and contest in five years' time, which is when the 14th general elections must take place.

Selangor Umno deputy chief Datuk Seri Noh Omar also said the opposition pact should use legal channels to protest vote results, criticising PR's rallies and protests as creating a culture of disobedience of the country's laws.

"Our country's electoral system is based on seats majority, not popular votes. They ask the government to carry out and follow clean electoral process, but they themselves do not follow the country's electoral system, instead disputing it with the popular vote reason.

"The opposition, as long as they don't win, they will continue questioning and disputing all the election results," he said.

BN lost the popular vote but won 133 federal seats against PR's 89, with the latter crying foul and claiming that they lost the chance to form the federal government due to alleged electoral fraud.

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