

Pakatan support in Selangor plunges to 35% since GE13, survey shows

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Support for Pakatan Rakyat (PR) in Selangor has plunged by 15% from a year ago when it trounced Barisan Nasional (BN) to hold power in the country's wealthiest state, according to a recent survey.

But ominously for BN, voters disappointed with in-fighting in PR have not returned to the ruling federal government. Support for the coalition was at 15% last year and this year, it rose by 10% to a dismal 25%.

The survey conducted by Universiti Malaya's Centre for Democracy and Elections (UMcedel) also showed the percentage of those unsure about both coalitions and refused to answer the question in the survey conducted recently stood at 40%.

"We have found that those who now don't support PR has shifted their opinion to the 'unsure' category, which now forms 40% (including 15% who do not want to answer), besides changing their allegiance to BN," UMcedel's former director Professor Datuk Dr Redzuan Othman said in a special presentation to political analysts, including The Malaysian

Insider, last week.

The study, conducted a year after GE13, found that support for Selangor PR has dropped to 35% from 50% recorded in September 2012, when the last study was done by the centre, added Redzuan, who lost his job at the centre last month.

At the same time, support for BN increased from 15% in 2012 to 25% in the last survey in Selangor.

However, the survey did not disclose the reasons for the loss of support suffered by Pakatan.

The survey was conducted from May 10 to 19, just as the country's richest state was witnessing political turmoil over Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim's tenure in office.

Khalid has apparently lost the support of his PKR party and allies a year into his second term and is under mounting pressure from the PR leadership to resign over his handling of Selangor affairs.

The issues include the management of the state's water resources, approval for the controversial Kidex highway and the seizure of Malay and Iban Bibles by the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais).

Speculation has been rife that Khalid would resign from his state post following a closed-door meeting among PKR, DAP and PAS leaders last week.

However, the MB has defiantly said he would only resign after his term expires, despite pressure from fellow party members. PKR de facto chief Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said over the weekend that his party has chosen a successor to replace Khalid.

The survey on PR's support in Selangor is the latest to be run by UMcedel, which also went through its own upheaval after Redzuan's service was terminated before his contract expired this December 31.

New UMcedel director Dr Amir Saifudee Ghazali was also present at Redzuan's briefing at the research centre office.

Redzuan's tenure as dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences was also not renewed on July 1, even though he was said to have received the highest votes from the academic staff to continue heading the faculty.

The Malaysian Insider had reported that Redzuan had earned the ire of Putrajaya

over the unflattering findings by UMcedel against the government.

Several studies were conducted on the situation a year after GE13, but only the research on Selangor was released early, as it was relevant to the current events in Selangor.

According to UMcedel, support for PR in Selangor increased since the first study was conducted in October 2011. At that time, PR had 21% support while BN had 33%.

This support went up to 38% based on a study conducted in March 2012. The coalition of PKR, PAS and DAP reached its highest at 50% in September that year, compared with BN's 16%.

The overwhelming support for PR led to its biggest win in Selangor in the GE13 in May last year, and Khalid was appointed as menteri besar for the second term.

In the 2013 election, PAS and DAP won 15 seats each, PKR won 14 while BN garnered only 12 seats. – July 21, 2014.

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