

BN Should Address Unresolved Issues, Especially GST, After Rompin By-Election

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ROMPIN, May 6 (Bernama) -- Barisan Nasional (BN) should address all unresolved issues, especially concerning the Goods and Services Tax (GST), after the Rompin by-election because those issues can give a long-term impact to the party, said political analysts.

Senior lecturer of Universiti Teknologi MARA's Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Assoc Prof Dr Ismail Sualman said the result of the by-election was also a clear signal from the people for the government to relook into several issues, including the implementation of the GST.

"The decline of almost 40 per cent in the vote majority should be seen as the signal from the people for the government to review its decision on several issues before the 14th general election so that such a result will not recur," he told Bernama here today.

He said the issue with the biggest impact was the GST implementation, which had been manipulated by the opposition as it involved the public.

As such, Ismail said issues concerning the GST should be scrutinised by the government to ensure smooth and systematic implementation of the system, besides ensuring that the enforcement agencies would do their best to reduce people's doubt.

The issues of GST are still disturbing to many people, especially the low income earners despite the various explanation given right down to the grass roots.

Many still find it difficult to accept the implementation of the GST, which has caused price hikes due to the irresponsible attitude of scrupulous traders.

Ismail said BN's lost in several polling district centres in Felda settlement in Rompin also required the party to change its strategy in winning the hearts of the voters.

Although Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced a price reduction for affordable housing for the second generation of Felda settlers just a few days before the by-election, it clearly wasn't enough to help BN to gain more votes.

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) Dean of the College of Law, Government and International Studies, Prof Dr Ahmad Marthada Mohamed said having a well-known candidate had helped ensure BN's victory in the by-election, but the people's dissatisfaction towards the government was clearly reflected in the reduced majority.

"Meanwhile, there is hardly a change in the number of votes garnered by PAS candidate, only short by 25 votes from the last general election," he said.

Ahmad Marthada said the BN really must really do something to win the support of the young voters, especially in Felda settlements, so that they would not be influenced by the many negative information to the extent of keeping them unreachable by BN.

In the Rompin by-election yesterday, BN lost in five out 38 polling district centres, including in Felda Keratong 2, 4 and 5, believed due to young voters' dissatisfaction over issues concerning the Felda Global Ventures (FGV) Berhad and housing for the second generation of Felda settlers.

Datuk Hasan Arifin, however, retained the parliamentary seat for BN with 8,895-vote majority after scoring a total 23,796 votes or 61 per cent of the votes, while his challenger Nazri Ahmad of PAS obtained only 14,901 votes of 39 per cent.

The by-election for the parliamentary seat was held following the death of its incumbent Tan Sri Dr Jamaluddin Jarjis in a helicopter crash in Semenyih, Selangor on April 4.

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