

## **PPBM may not win a single seat, says analyst**

**Free Malaysia Today**

**April 16, 2017**

**By Minderjeet Kaur**

### **Hoo Kee Ping explains why he thinks Barisan Nasional will gain more seats if the 14th general election is held within the next ten months.**

PETALING JAYA: A pundit has predicted abject failure for Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), saying he doesn't see the new party winning even one seat in the 14th general election.

Hoo Kee Ping, an economist and a keen observer of Malaysian politics, says PPBM, as an Umno splinter, does not have the dynamism of the now defunct Semangat 46, the party that Umno veteran Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah formed in 1987.

Semangat managed to cause a split in UMNO, drawing into its fold several of the ruling party's prominent figures, including ministers and deputy ministers.

Hoo noted that PPBM had not seen similar support from UMNO leaders, despite being led by former premier Mahathir Mohamad and former deputy prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin.

"So there is no split in UMNO," he said in an interview with FMT.

He also said he expected Barisan Nasional to do better than it did in 2013 if the 14th general election were called within the next 10 months.

Prime Minister Najib Razak said on Friday that BN had "sharpened the sword" and was making intensive preparations for the coming election.

Hoo said BN, unlike Pakatan Harapan, had managed to show a united front.

He added that voters in Felda settlements were happy with UMNO because palm oil prices were expected to rise. Votes from Felda settlers are significant in 60 parliament and nearly 100 state constituencies.

"When the rural Malay voters are happy with the government they will give their support, and it will be the other way round when they are angry with the ruling party," Hoo said.

He also said more Chinese were expected to vote for BN because the economic slowdown would cause many of them to choose the coalition for stability.

“When the economy is good, the Chinese opt for the opposition, but when the economy is bad, they choose stability,” he said.

He said the redrawing of electoral boundaries, splitting Malay and Chinese voters, would also help BN win.

Although urban voters would generally continue to support the opposition, he said, their votes would be split if the redrawing of electoral borders were approved.

Activists have made a similar observation, noting in the Election Commission’s proposal for the redelineation of boundaries that many Chinese voters from Wangsa Maju, Bandar Tun Razak and Pantai Dalam constituencies, for example, will be moved to Seputeh, Cheras and Batu, which are already DAP and PKR strongholds. In another example, Lumut will have 70% Malay majority to favour Umno after the redelineation.

Hoo also said BN would likely win in three-cornered fights against PAS and a Pakatan party.

“The odds favour BN,” he said.

He also predicted that BN would retain Sabah and Sarawak.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/04/16/ppbm-may-not-win-a-single-seat-says-analyst/>