

BN landslide

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Pak Lah gets his mandate for change

KUALA LUMPUR: Barisan Nasional has won a massive victory in the general election and in the process recaptured Terengganu and claimed victory in Kelantan as well.

The victory is a personal triumph for Prime Minister and Barisan chairman Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. He now has a clear mandate from Malaysian voters for his campaign for reforms.

The Barisan sweep in the Malay heartland was so effective that opposition PAS leader Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang lost his parliamentary seat in Terengganu.

The PAS election machinery was further torn apart when its list of casualties included vice-president Datuk Dr Ali Hassan (Parit Buntar), secretary-general Nasharuddin Mat Isa (Besut), central committee members Mahfuz Omar (Pokok Sena), Mohamed Sabu (Kuala Kedah) and Datuk Taib Azamudeen (Baling).

The party's charismatic information chief Datuk Dr Haron Din lost in his bid for a state and parliamentary seat in Perlis.

PAS spiritual adviser and Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat managed to cling on to his Chempaka state seat.

Barisan reclaims Terengganu which it lost in 1999. In Kelantan,

which has been under PAS rule for 14 years, the coalition says it has taken 23 of the 45 state seats.

Barisan chief Abdullah, in his victory speech at the PWTC after the 14-party coalition secured its two-thirds parliamentary majority, said the big win meant that the rakyat accepted and supported the Barisan.

The mandate they gave was for the Barisan to continue its agenda of "excellence, distinction and glory" to develop the nation and ensure continuous peace and prosperity, he said.

Parti Keadilan Nasional lost its parliamentary voice when all its parliamentary candidates were rejected by the voters, except for party president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail in her Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat where a recount would be done today.

The DAP, which was routed in the 1999 elections following its electoral pact with PAS, bettered its performance with the return of party chairman Lim Kit Siang and his deputy, Karpal Singh, to Parliament.

DAP secretary-general Kerk Kim Hock appeared beaten in Kota Melaka by the MCA, which claims sweet victory after 35 years. However, there will be a recount for



THANK YOU, MALAYSIA: Abdullah and his wife Datin Paduka Seri Endon Mahmood at the Umno headquarters at the PWTC last night waving to their supporters who gave them a standing ovation after the coalition had won more than two-thirds majority. — STARpic by NORAFIFI EHSAN