

'BN pledges more comprehensive

ACHIEVABLE: Political analysts say its manifesto more realistic, credible

SUKHBIR CHEEMA
KUALA LUMPUR
sukhbir@nst.com.my

THE Barisan Nasional election manifesto is more comprehensive and covers every aspect of Malaysia's development.

Local political analysts said yesterday they believed that it had more realistic and believable pledges compared with Pakatan Rakyat's manifesto which lacked credibility in terms of probability of being fulfilled.

"BN's manifesto has 44 items listed as 'promises', with 31 among them being projects already ongoing and to be continued if they

return to power," said Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Professor Datuk-Dr Shamsul Amri Baharuddin.

He cited successful ongoing projects such as the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) and 13 new projects.

"We can paste this list on the wall today and in five years' time or before GE14, we can tick and evaluate BN's manifesto in a concrete sense," he said, referring to BN's pledges that had been fulfilled from previous manifestos.

The manifesto, which was unveiled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak in Stadium Putra Bukit Jalil on Saturday, had many pledges based on realistic economic growth.

"Every promise is grounded on a

work plan and budget unlike Pakatan Rakyat's as they only made feel-good promises," said Shamsul, adding that PR lacked BN's credibility as they had no experience in governing the country.

He said that even though PR's manifesto had many plans, such as abolishing toll and free education, it lacked a strategic and comprehensive plan on the implementation process.

Associate Professor Dr Sivamurugan Pandian of Universiti Sains Malaysia said that through BN's manifesto, Najib wanted his track record evaluated rationally and added that it would pave the way for the transformation to a better nation.

"It's a transformation journey

and a pledge to do more if a strong mandate is given in the 13th General Election," he said, adding that the 'People First' 1Malaysia concept was still the framework for the entire manifesto.

Political analyst Associate Professor Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani said BN's manifesto looked more comprehensive compared with previous ones, adding that it was a continuation of their previous policies.

"It's a continuation of the Government Transformation Programme as it's set to provide a political and economical transformation to the country."

Historian Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Khoo Kay Kim said BN's manifesto addressed all the major problems faced by Malaysians and stood a better chance of being fulfilled.

Compared with PR's manifesto, he said, BN's stood a better chance of being fulfilled as PR pledged many promises in its manifesto that it was not certain to keep.

Another political analyst, Khoo Kay Peng, shared the same sentiments, saying that the manifesto by BN had a more believable advantage due to the coalition's incumbency and its track record in managing the country.

Universiti Putra Malaysia social anthropologist Associate Professor Dr Sarjit Singh Gill said while BN's manifesto was more achievable and justified, it should have been more focused on minority groups.

"There should be more focus on the minorities such as the Siamese, Chettis, Portuguese, Babas and Nyonyas, Sikhs and, most importantly, those from Sabah and Sarawak as their plights need to be addressed, too."

Universiti Utara Malaysia head of politics, security and international affairs cluster, Prof Datuk Dr Mustafa Işhak, described BN's manifesto as a step towards preparing and making Malaysia a high income and developed country by 2020.

