

Snap election won't resolve current political situation — Analysts

KUCHING: A snap election will not be able to resolve the current political situation in the country, opined political scientist Dr Jayum Jawan Empaling.

Commenting on the recent suggestion of snap polls by former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Jayum said although this may temporarily resolve political instability, the same situation could reemerge as no party would win an absolute majority.

“The country would still be treading the same path,” he told **thesundaypost** when contacted.

Jayum, a professor of Politics and Government at the Department Of Government and Civilisation Studies in the Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), said Malaysia's political scene has been riddled with uncertainty since the 2018 general elections because no single political party or coalition has managed to secure a simple majority.

He said while the previous Pakatan Harapan (PH)

government was based on a fragile coalition of various parties and individuals, the same goes for the current Perikatan Nasional (PN) government.

Jayum said not even veteran statesman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the longest serving Malaysian Prime Minister, could hold the PH government together, so current Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has an uphill battle.

“And like Mahathir, who came from a party that has the least number of parliamentary seats, Muhyiddin too comes from a political party that has a small number of parliamentary seats compared to its main partner Umno,” he said.

On how a snap general election would affect Sarawak, he said the state is most likely not going to be affected even if it were to hold its state election concurrently with the parliamentary election.

Fellow political analyst Prof James Chin opined snap polls are unlikely because the current ruling government would not

agree to it.

“Najib can try to push for a snap poll but it is very unlikely it will be held. The prime minister (Muhyiddin) is from Bersatu (Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia) and it's quite obvious Bersatu does not want early polls.

“Same goes for PAS (Parti Islam SeMalaysia) and most of Umno,” he said.

Chin, who is University of Tasmania's Asia Institute director, also said Sarawak would likely still prefer to hold its state election separately.

“Sarawak is the last state in Malaysia to hold a separate state election so it's highly unlikely that it will agree to hold one together with the general election.

“Part of the reason is they want to separate federal issues from state issues. If they hold it together it will be much harder to decouple the issues,” he said.

Chin said the state's ruling Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) coalition stands for Sarawak nationalism, and agreeing to have

a concurrent election would make it look bad.

“Also GPS is in a sweet spot now in terms of the coming state election, so I don't think they will muddle it by holding it together with the general election,” he said.

On Wednesday (June 3), Najib posted on Facebook that snap polls may be held if the country's political situation continues to be in disarray, causing it to lose focus on restoring the country's economy post Covid-19.

He also advised the Ministry of Health and the Election Commission to draft standard operating procedures (SOP) should a general election be held in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Najib also urged PH and PN to stop the political drama and work on restoring the country's economy without such distractions.

A screenshot of Najib's Facebook post on June 3.