

Beat: Politics

The Silent Walk to Protest GE13 Results

The Silent Protest

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USPA NEWS - A group of young voters in Penang participated in a silent walk yesterday to express their disappointment over the election results which they felt did not reflect the nation's desire for a change in government. Clad in black attire with tape over their mouths, more than 150 Penangites gather at

Queensbay Shopping Mall on May 6 at 5pm and walked through the streets. Asked on why they decided to organise the walk, Sabrina Aripen from NGO Borneo Youth Revolution said: "What else can we do but mourn (the death of Malaysian democracy)?" A brief confrontation between the silent walkers took place in front of the Umno office premise when an Umno representative came down from the office and tried to explain the nature of the "handouts" given out on election day. The personnel, however, declined the walkers' requests to disclose the sum of money given out, which miffed the crowd. The confrontation broke up when two policemen instructed the crowd to disperse.

Jan Chow who spearheaded the walk said that the unexpected attendance showed that Sabahans, especially the younger generation are waking up and are no longer content to just keep quiet about their grouses with a "corrupt ruling government administration." "Most of the walk's participants comprised of young Sabahans in their mid 20s to late 30s, as well as first-time voters. "It's a good sign that Sabahans, who are generally very laid-back, are starting to become aware of our political responsibilities and also becoming more vocal in standing up for their rights as Malaysian citizens," she said. As the de facto spokesperson of the silent walk, Chow explained her reasons for organising it.

"Also, I was disappointed by some of the non-BN component parties' candidates who did not do their job to protect our votes by ignoring Pacaba's recommendations to put emphasis on the Borang 14 forms that would have made it impossible to manipulate vote counting." she said. Chow explained that Borang 14 would guarantee that all candidates would have knowledge of the exact vote tally before it was officially announced, making the chances of vote count manipulation impossible. "If all election candidates treated Pacaba seriously, they would know that blackout and ballot box swappings do not work any more because of the Borang 14 system," she lamented.

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