

GE14: More women candidates in Sabah inevitable – Analyst

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KOTA KINABALU: The women's involvement in the country's political arena is undeniable, with several great figures being fielded as candidates representing the party to contest and subsequently brought victory in every election.

Women's participation in the political arena can also be seen as recognising and upholding their increased contribution and role in shaping the country's development as well as efforts to realise the target of 30 per cent of women's involvement in decision-making.

It is no exception in Sabah with the women candidates being given the opportunity to represent the political parties to contest in the elections whether for the parliamentary or state seats as promised by the manifesto of the political parties that among others, is to safeguard women's wellbeing.

For example, in the 13th general election (GE13), several women candidates from the Barisan Nasional (BN) were fielded to contest in several parliamentary seats, namely, Papar parliamentary

seat (Datuk Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin); Beaufort (Datuk Azizah Mohd Dun); Tawau (Datuk Mary Yap Kain Ching); and Batu Sapi (Datuk Tsen Thau Lin).

Also nominated as candidates for state seats in the GE13, among others, were Datuk Jainab Ahmad Ayid (Karambunai-BN); Datuk Anita Baranting (Tandek-BN); Christina Liew (Api-Api-PKR) and Datuk Hamisa Samat (Tanjong Batu-BN).

Political analyst from the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Ramli Dollah said the increase in the number of women candidates in the

state was inevitable as there were ongoing calls from various political parties to field women candidates in the election.

Women representatives were also indispensable in terms of developments in the Sabah community who want women to be given greater opportunities to engage in politics, he told Bernama.

"Based on the electoral roll for 2018, the male and female voters are almost equal in numbers in almost all parliamentary and state seats, both in the urban and rural areas," he said.

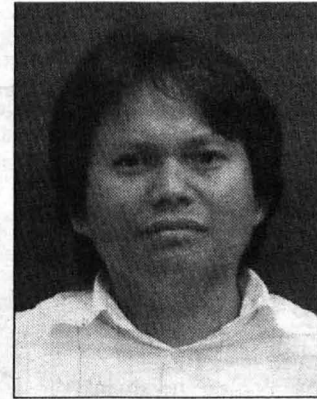
However, Ramli, who is also the UMS' Humanities,

Arts and Heritage Faculty's senior lecturer, said the women representation in Sabah's political arena was still lacking, and based on representations in the state legislative assembly, there were only four persons or 15 per cent of all 60 assemblymen.

Ramli's view was shared by his fellow UMS lecturer Fadilah Sarbi who said that the participation of more women politicians whether at the state or parliamentary level would allow their voices to become more vocal to be heard.

However, Fadilah, who is also a geopolitical lecturer, of the UMS' Humanities, Arts and Heritage Faculty, said the merger of political parties contesting under one symbol would create competition in terms of candidate selection as the total number of candidates would shrink compared to the original arrangement.

Fadilah said that in the GE13, the BN had fielded eight women candidates, seven of whom won and were appointed as ministers and deputies both at the state and federal levels.



Ramli

The acceptance of women candidates in the GE13 in Sabah was quite good and the candidates who won the seats and given the mandate have performed within their best capabilities in carrying out their responsibilities, she said.

On Sunday, PAS announced that it would field two women candidates in Sabah in the GE14, namely, Norsah Bongsu, 47, the new face for the Batu Sapi parliamentary and Karamunting state seats, and Dausieh Queck @ Paraman, for the Pitas state seat. – Bernama

