

MEDIA STATEMENT

IDEAS: Upon winning the Johor state election, political parties must take manifesto pledges seriously and commit to reforms

Kuala Lumpur, 11 March 2022: The Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) reads with interest the manifestos presented by Barisan Nasional (BN), Perikatan Nasional (PN), Pakatan Harapan (PH) and MUDA for the upcoming Johor state election. We are encouraged by the presence of institutional reform, transparency and accountability pledges in all four manifestos.

“In particular, we applaud BN, MUDA and PH’s pledge of equal constituency allocations for all ADUNs regardless of party, a call that IDEAS has made in our paper [here](#), which was jointly published with BERSIH. It is also encouraging to see the newest party on the block, MUDA, committing to transparency in how political funds are raised and spent, which should set an example for other more established parties. The absence of political financing legislation at the federal level should not prevent political parties from taking their own initiative to be transparent themselves,” comments Aira Azhari, Senior Manager of the Democracy and Governance Unit at IDEAS.

“Furthermore, we hope for commitments from PN and PH to improve the performance, governance and accountability of state-level Government-Linked Companies (GLCs). Unlike federal GLCs, state GLCs do not receive much public or media scrutiny, which is why these pledges are important and must be fully committed to when in power.”

“Pledges to improve the effectiveness of the State Legislative Assembly (DUN) are also positive, notably by PH and BN, where the addition and strengthening of the Select Committees undoubtedly raise the capacity of the DUN to keep the State Government accountable. BN’s pledge to make it mandatory for ADUNs to declare their assets to the MACC also contributes to fighting corruption, and is an issue IDEAS has researched on [here](#).”

Lastly, PN’s pledge to increase transparency in the procurement process of State Government projects should be applauded. “IDEAS has been working with civil society organisations (CSOs) at the subnational level to assess the level of transparency of state government budgets and infrastructure projects, where we will publish a report and website later this year. We are hopeful that our findings will be useful for all state governments in Malaysia to move towards more transparency and accountability in how public money is spent.”

“To the people of Johor, we urge you to hold your political leaders accountable to the promises they make. Good governance is at the bedrock of many of our day-to-day issues, and we are hopeful that these promises will be committed to by whichever party/parties form the state government. IDEAS hopes this practice of policy-driven politics will continue in all future elections to come,” ends Aira.

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About IDEAS

The Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) is a nonprofit research institute, dedicated to promoting solutions to public policy challenges, focussing on three overarching missions – advancing a competitive economy, ensuring trust in institutions and promoting an inclusive Malaysia. IDEAS is Malaysia’s first independent think tank, free of personal interests and partisan influences. For more information, visit www.ideas.org.my.

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