

Uwamwe Umwami

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The New Government

After elections, Wisnumatan is likely to remain as prime minister

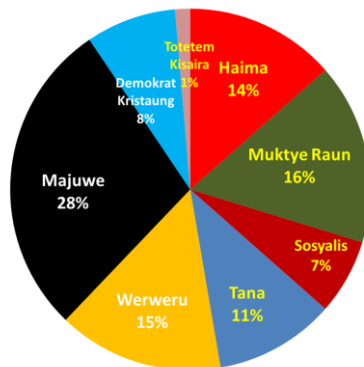
Purikali - After the parliamentary elections held on last Thursday, Ms Wisnumatan's Party of Progress (PM) is likely to have an agreement with Party of Renovation (PW). The new coalition – PM, PW and PDK – will have the minimum necessary number of seats (38) in the Haimauman to form the new government. The National Party (PT) left the coalition due to disagreements with the government, mostly regarding cuts in expenditures considered essential, such as Defence.

Against previous forecasts, PM had a good performance in the elections keeping the same number of seats (21), while the main opposition party, PMR, lost 8 seats. This result was attributed to the recovery in the economy this year – expected growth around 5%, unemployment kept in 6% and inflation of less than 0.6% – as a result of the economic measures of the government.

The final result led to the following distribution: Party of Progress (PM), 21 seats; Party of Liberty-Green (PMR), 12; Party of Renovation (PW), 11; Party of the People (PH), 10; National

Party (PT), 8; Christian Democratic Party (PDK), 6; Socialist Party (PS), 5; and Party of United Workers (PTK), 1 seat.

According to analysts, the overall loss of seats by the left-wing parties (PMR, PH, PS and PTK) and the tendency of the coalition for liberal measures in the economy will make social bills more difficult to be approved, such as the severance package or the thirteenth salary, currently under discussion.



Environment

Toward a cleaner environment

Purikali - One of the first challenges of the new government will be the discussion about the resumption of Palimasune nuclear power plant construction that was stopped since 2010 during the government of Aswini Ruikawahi (PMR), after the accident of Fukushima in Japan. This resumption, supported by the coalition, is strongly opposed by environmentalists, including PMR. Alternatives are being discussed, like the continuity of the development of wind power plants or the construction of a solar thermal power plant.

The car manufacturer Watera is demanding more subsidies and tax exemptions for electric cars produced in the country to increase the fleet of electric vehicles, currently with less than 7% of the total. According to CEO Kawi Taumai, the company is planning to have only electric cars in its portfolio in five years. In Darapali, its subsidiary for scooters, tricycles and mini cars, the production of electric vehicles increased from 3.5% to more than 80% this year. "The government needs to create a solid policy to promote the sector, focussing on local producers and increasing related services like charging stations, currently very limited", Mr Taumai commented.

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