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Election-N.Sembilan

AN OUTSTANDING VICTORY IN NEGERI SEMBILAN- DR RAIS

By: Azeman Zakaria

KUALA KLAWANG, Nov 30 (Bernama) --The Negeri Sembilan Barisan Nasional's clean sweep of all 32 state and seven Parliamentary seats amounts to an outstanding victory in the face of the strong pressure from the opposition, former Menteri Besar Datuk Dr Rais Yatim said today.

With the opposition making inroads in various states in the north, Negeri Sembilan remained a strong fortress for the BN with this historic clean sweep, he said.

It would remain a glorious chapter in Negeri Sembilan BN's history and a sweet victory for the people, he told Bernama in an interview.

Dr Rais won the Jelebu seat on a BN ticket in the just concluded General Election by defeating Jaafar Muhammad of Keadialn with a majority of 7,119 votes. Dr Rais polled 17,028 votes against the 9,909 for his opponent. He had won the seat on BN tickets in 1974, 1982 and 1986 but lost in 1990 and 1995 when he contested on the Parti Melayu Semangat 46 ticket.

Dr Rais said the defeat of DAP National Chairman Dr Chen Man Hin in the Temiang state seat by Lee Yuen Fong and in the Rasah Parliamentary seat by Datuk Goh Siow Huat was a strong slap in the face for the DAP.

"This is the final hurrah for the socialist party. I do not think socialist parties have a future place in this country. Their era has ended," he said noting the defeat also of DAP Deputy National Chairman Karpal Singh and party Secretary-General Lim Kit Siang.

Dr Rais said the victory of Lee also known as "Tiger Lee" in Temiang was indeed sweet for Lee, for in 1995, he had won the seat on a DAP ticket then defected to the MCA and now he had won the seat against DAP strongman Dr Chen.

Lee won by a majority of 176 votes after polling 6,467 votes against Dr Chen's 6,291.

The DAP's loss nevertheless should serve as a lesson to the BN so that it would not suffer a similar fate in view of the generally reduced majorities in the various constituencies, Dr Rais said.

"The BN must stop PAS'advance as the party's appetite had been whetted by its victory in Terengganu," he said.

On his re-entry into mainstream politics, Dr Rais said he would leave his position to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and for the present he would focus on serving his constituents in Jelebu.

Negeri Sembilan MCA Chairman Datuk Wong See Wah who decided not to seek re-election in Rasah, said despite the pressure the State BN performed very well and this reflected the people's continued strong support for the state BN leadership.

"The people generally supported the BN as they want stability. The Negeri Sembilan MCA was all along confident that its nine candidates for state seats and the two for Parliament seats will win," he said.

He said the choice of "Tiger Lee" in Teminag showed that the people preferred those who really worked for the constituents.

"Eventhough Dr Chen is the DAP National Chairman, he only put in an appearance once in four or five years when there is a general election unlike Tiger Lee," Wong said.

Meanwhile analysts noted that Malays voted heavily for PAS in the east coast and northern states despite its association with the DAP in the Aternative Front and hence the religious factor should be downplayed.

However the defeat of DAP big guns is attributed to its links with PAS

in the Alternative Front.

Disagreeing with this conclusion, the analysts said the MCA candidates won because of their service to the people.

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