

20 NOV 1999

Tajol-MB

"MENTERI BESAR DESIGNATE" FACTOR WILL BOOST BN'S CHANCES IN GERIK

GERIK, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- There was much excitement at the nomination centre here for the Gerik Parliamentary and the three state seats within it, not only because of the straight fights but also among the candidates was someone who is likely to be Perak's next Chief Executive.

When the Returning Officer announced that Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali, 55, has been accepted as a candidate for the Kenering state at 1.15pm, there was loud applause from the crowd of 4,000 which believed that the Gerik MP since 1978 would be their new Menteri Besar.

Gerik has 38,637 voters spread among three state constituencies of Pengkalan Hulu (14, 848 voters), Temenggor (11,879) and Kenering (11,910) and are known to be a BN stronghold where PAS and Keadilan are trying to sneak in.

Tajol Rosli had won the Kenering seat and had been the assemblyman for nine months in 1977 after his father Tan Sri Ghazali Jawi vacated the seat and was named an ambassador.

The soft-spoken Tajol Rosli insisted that he did not receive any indication from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir about the Menteri Besar's post.

Nevertheless the majority of the people in Gerik were confident that he would be the next Menteri Besar of Perak.

"He has a clean record and is a moderate figure," said the BN candidate for Pengkalan Hulu, Ibrahim Mohamed Hanafiah.

He said the "Menteri Besar Designate" factor would greatly help the BN campaign and there had been no personal attack against Tajol by the opposition.

His PAS opponent in Kenering Azman Pandak also said the factor would influence the voting here and also affect support for the opposition.

To the people here, an opportunity to have a Menteri Besar from Ulu Perak should not be missed after having waited all these years.

Ulu Perak had supplied three Menteris Besar in the past including Mohamed Ghazali who served between 1957-60 and 1974-77.

Tajol Rosli said his main duty was to ensure victory for the BN "and the question of post is not important at this juncture....what is more important is the BN's victory in this general election."

-- BERNAMA

HJ AAM