

# Will it be 1-1 or 2-0?

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## Guessing game on results as BN-PAS fight reaches finale

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**ALOR STAR:** As the campaign for the Pendang and Anak Bukit seats reaches its climax with both the Barisan Nasional and PAS going into overdrive in the last 48 hours, punters, voters and observers are playing guessing games on the results.

Diehard punters, out to make a quick buck at every opportunity, are said to be most eager about the outcome of the straight fights between the archrivals.

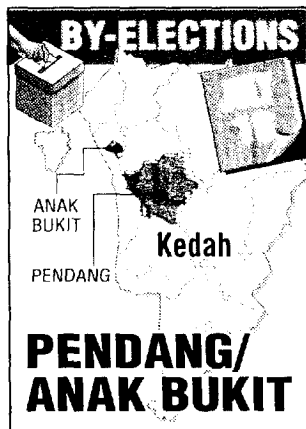
The most used phrase these days - from voters, observers and supporters to political leaders - seems to be the scoreline: 1-1 or 2-0.

While the BN supporters seem to think that it will be 2-0 in their favour, the opposition is not letting up on its chances of double victories either.

Others who want to play it safe said it will be a draw.

The BN supporters seem confident the coalition has the edge in Anak Bukit.

During the 1999 polls, its candidate, Datuk Abdullah Hasnan Kamaruddin, lost to the late Datuk Fadzil Mohd



Noor of PAS by a majority of 1,840 votes.

The current BN candidate, Datuk Zakaria Said, 58, faces Amiruddin Hamzah, 40.

BN is confident it will garner support from almost all of the 11.09% Chinese voters and 1.49% Indian voters.

It also hopes for stronger backing from Malays who form 87% of the electorate.

Zakaria is confident 60% of the Malay votes will go his way. There are 19,399 registered voters in Anak Bukit.

"This is nothing new to me, I took the seat from PAS in 1982 and held on to it for three terms. I managed to win in

1982 though I was mostly alone in the campaigning as it was then the general election," he said.

"Now, with the entire BN machinery behind me and based on my track record, we will win the seat, even if it is just by a one-vote majority."

Meanwhile, PAS is also confident of retaining the seat.

Last Thursday, the controversial Mohamad Sabu rated the party's chances at 50:50.

However, Amiruddin expressed confidence yesterday the seat will remain with the party.

His contention was that things cannot be going exactly the right way for BN, since Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself had come to boost the BN campaign.

The outcome is crucial for both BN and PAS. A win for BN will give it two-thirds majority in the state legislative assembly.

About 30km away in Pendang, the battle for the hearts and minds of the Malays is still at a feverish pitch, with BN and PAS trying to outdo each other in wit and charm to "convert" voters.

BN candidate Datuk Oth-

man Abdul, who lost the seat to Fadzil in 1999, is hoping to avenge his defeat.

He is banking on his track record of having served the constituency from 1983 to 1999.

He expressed confidence that the voters would not be swayed by emotions, including sympathy for Fadzil, who died last month.

He faces Dr Mohd Hayati Othman, 45, a local who has his own private practice.

Mohd Hayati is confident that the party still has the edge over the BN.

"All said and done, at the end of the day, we know that the voters who supported PAS during the 1999 general elections are still with us.

"There is no doubt about this, as PAS has not let them down after winning the seat. We have not neglected our obligations and duties."

PAS leaders have refuted claims that BN has succeeded in penetrating PAS strongholds.

Whatever the outcome, the voters will be relieved to have their towns back to themselves, and for a return to some form of normalcy after more than 10 days of "circus".