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An even contest seen in Shah Alam

SHAH ALAM, Wed. - Datuk Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin is a confident man. He is four days away from contesting his first election and he is already playing the role of the MP.

While on his rounds in the parliamentary seat of Shah Alam, he has promised to look into building a fully-residential secondary school, into the possibility of having a Chinese language school and improving the road system.

He has to be on the ball in this constituency. In 1999, the BN candidate here saw its once commanding position seriously threatened. The winning margin here: 1,440.

But BN supporters say that in the absence of major issues, the chances of getting a bigger majority here is bright.

Shah Alam Wanita Umno division's information chief Latifah Sidek said: "People are not emotional anymore like in 1999 and have realised which party can deliver the goods".

The one trouble spot: the former political secretary to Tun Mahathir Mohamad is viewed as an outsider by some. Still, Aziz believes that the superior election machinery will pave the way for victory on March 21.

Quite confident of a good showing is Pas Selangor information chief Khalid Samad, 47, the younger brother of Johor Umno veteran Datuk Shahrir.

Based on feedback, he fancied his chances of winning.

On his rounds, he has been peppered with questions on the Islamic state. "I told them the system would not be forced upon the people," he said.

He has also campaigned on the need for an Opposition in parliament to check any misuse of power and other abuses.

The backroom boys of Pas believe that Shah Alam is one of the seats in the state where victory is a real possibility.

Retired civil servant Mohd Ramli Yusof said based on the sentiment on the ground, it looked like an even contest between BN and Pas.

The constituency has 67,490 voters, made up of 45,163 Malays, 11,235 Chinese, 10,902 Indians and 190 others.