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`Kedah votes will swing to Pas'

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Pas information chief Datuk Dr Haron Din said votes in Kedah would swing to Pas as Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is not defending his Kubang Pasu seat in the next general election.

"Dr Mahathir has an influence in Kedah. When he does not contest, votes will swing to us," he said.

Haron, who will lead Pas' charge up north in the next general election, cited Dr Mahathir's decision not to seek re-election as one of the factors that would see Pas making greater strides in Kedah.

His remarks were contradictory to what other Pas leaders had said during the run up to the 1999 general election when they were confident of winning Kedah on grounds, among others, that Dr Mahathir was unpopular.

Haron said Pas was confident of its prospect in Kedah and Perlis as the young people, fence-sitters and non-Muslims in these two states were more receptive to the party's struggle.

The 63-year-old religious scholar and retired Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia lecturer said he preferred to contest in Perlis, his home State.

Given a choice, he would stand for a parliamentary seat.

"But all these will depend on the party's strategy. I can contest anywhere, in Perlis or Kedah," he said today.

He did not dismiss the possibility of him contesting both in Perlis and Kedah.

Asked whether his political foes would start attacking him verbally, now that he had made public his intention to contest the general election, Haron, who was appointed information chief on Sept 28, said he was ready to face such attacks.