

Kerdau: PM upbeat on Felda support
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Najib Tun Razak is confident that Felda settlers will continue to support the government.

The Prime Minister said today the settlers knew on whom they must depend to develop their area further.

He visited Felda Jengka 23, 24 and 25 schemes in Kerdau, and he said he found the people well disposed to the government, and likely to vote BN in the March 6 by-election.

"I found the mood was good ... but we must not take the opposition lightly," he told reporters at Jengka 25 after meeting the settlers.

"We have to determine what we have to do, that our strategy is correct. We must do all necessary for BN to win, he said.

Najib disagreed with the observation that BN was campaigning harder than the opposition although Kerdau was supposed to be an Umno stronghold.

He said the opposition had actually been campaigning harder, going on road shows and using the Internet.

The Kerdau by-election is a straight fight between Syed Ibrahim Syed Ahmad of BN and PAS candidate Hassanuddin Salim.

MIC bigwigs hit Merlimau

Meanwhile six MIC leaders have been appointed to ensure a good Indian turnout at six polling stations in the Merlimau state by-election next Sunday.

MIC Melaka chairman R Perumal said more attention would be given to the six polling stations as they have many Indian voters.

He said the party leaders selected would look into the needs of residents in the areas besides leading the party's campaign.

MIC deputy president S Subramaniam will take charge in Merlimau Pasir while vice-presidents SK Devamany (Jasin Lalang) and M Saravanan (Merlimau Utara).

MIC Youth chief T Mohan (Pengkalan Samak), Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department T Murugiah (Chinchin) and Johor MIC secretary M Asojan (Ayer Merbau), said Perumal when contacted today.

Perumal, who is also MIC election operation director, said the MIC, which had met about 1,200 of 1,512 Indian voters in Merlimau, would also provide transportation for the voters during the polls.

MCA follows suit

Melaka MCA chief Gan Tian Loo also said they had and would continue meeting up with representatives of non-governmental organisations, churches, temples and schools to obtain feedback on their needs and problems faced.

"For example, the Chinese school (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina Merlimau), has asked for additional land to expand the school and for an allocation to buy tables and chairs for the classrooms.

"In Merlimau town, there are residents who lamented that the leasehold on their land would be expiring soon and we have solved this by getting the leasehold extended to 99 years," he said.

Gan said MCA once again appointed seven deputy ministers as "foster parents" in the voting areas, just like what was done in the Tenang by-election in Johor last month.

"They will be responsible for monitoring the voters, and looking into their problems and solving them as soon as possible," he said.

Two of the seven deputy ministers involved are party vice-presidents Donald Lim Siang Chai (Finance Ministry) and Senator Gan Ping Sieu (Youth and Sports) while another is Youth chief Wee Ka Siong (Education).

The other four are MCA central working committee members Lee Chee Leong (Home Ministry), Hou Kok Chung (Higher Education), Senator Heng Seai Kie (Women, Family and Community Development), and Chua Tee Yong (Agriculture and Agro-based Industry).

Gan said MCA's main mission now was to win the support of everyone in areas under the purview of the deputy ministers concerned.

"Even in areas with a small number of Chinese...for instance, in Chinchin, if I'm not mistaken, we still want to meet everybody. We should not miss even one voter," he added.

He said MCA was also holding ceramah (talks) at night in selected housing areas.

According to him, most of the MCA top leaders had gone to the ground to meet the people, while party president Chua Soi Lek was expected to visit Merlimau again very soon.

Asked whether MCA would be providing vehicles to ferry voters to the polling centres on March 6, Gan said the matter was being discussed.

The Merlimau by-election is being held following the death of its incumbent assemblyman Mohamad Hidhir Abu Hassan from heart attack on Jan 20.

BN has named Roslan Ahmad, 44, as its candidate who faces Yuhaizad Abdullah, 38, from PAS in the by-election.

- Bernama