

Pollster: Disorganised PAS to hand Merlimau to BN
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Research group Ilham Centre has pegged a win for the BN in Merlimau, citing the success of the 1Malaysia by-election strategy, but says the ruling party is unlikely to regain much of the non-Malay votes lost in 2008.

According to the poll released today, of the 432 people polled, 68.6 percent claim that they will vote for BN, 15.5 percent will vote PAS while another 15.9 percent are undecided.

Many of those who will vote for PAS will be the non-Malays, it said, owing to DAP's efforts to retain the Chinese voters, who make up about 20 percent of the electorate.

"DAP's machinery...is committed to safeguard Chinese majority polling centres to ensure that the MCA machinery is unable to manipulate any swing in the Chinese votes for BN this time," said Ilham executive director Mohd Azlan Ismail.

"The voting pattern of Chinese voters here is expected to be maintained."

The poll however found the PAS machinery "disorganised" and no match for BN's aggressive, huge and well-funded campaign machinery.

The poll also found that a significant 56.5 percent of respondents said that the 1Malaysia campaign will influence their vote, alongside the issue of local infrastructure and facilities.

Interestingly over 40 percent polled said that they are also influenced by BN's personal attack on PAS candidate Yuhaizad Abdullah, who is painted as ungrateful for going against the government despite living in government quarters with his wife, who is a teacher, and four children.

About half claimed that they do not know who Yuhaizad is, although 22.7 percent who do said they believe that he has good values and characteristics.

This, however, pales against BN's Roslan Ahmad, whom over 50 percent felt was a strong candidate as he is well-known and comes from a prominent family in Merlimau.

PAS eyes fence-sitters, youth

Speaking to reporters earlier, PAS election director Abdul Halim Abdul Rahman said that the party is confident of 3211 votes, which include about 75 percent of the total Chinese votes.

They are gunning for about half of the Indian votes and is believed to have about 35 percent of Malay voters on their side.

Above all, Abdul Halim said that PAS is banking on the fence-sitters to take Yuhaizad across the finish line ahead of Roslan in a razor thin majority of less than 100 votes.

They are hoping for a 78 percent turnout, that mirrors the Election Commission's target turnout of 80 percent, especially among young voters and the 400-plus first time voters.

BN Merlimau by-election director and Malacca Chief Minister Mohd Ali Rustam claims to have 100 percent Indian backing and about 55 percent Chinese support.

Merlimau goes to the polls tomorrow starting 8am.

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