

Kerdau: We will work harder, pledges BN
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BN leaders today pledged to work harder to better the lot of Kerdau residents after earning an empathic victory over arch-rivals PAS in today's Kerdau by-election.

BN's debutante candidate Syed Ibrahim Syed Ahmad earned 5,060 votes, a 2,624-vote majority over PAS veteran Hassanuddin Salim, who only managed to pull in 2,336 votes.

Pahang Menteri Besar Adnan Yaakob said the result was much better than what they had achieved in the past two general elections.

"This is a win for the Kerdau voters, the Malays, Chinese and Indians, and for the prime minister and the country," he said at the victory press conference at the tally centre at Dewan Tun Razak in Temerloh this evening.

Adnan said Syed Ibrahim's victory by an increased margin means that the people of Kerdau have more trust for BN instead of PAS.

He stressed however that their victory also means they will have to work harder to fulfil the many needs of the people.

"With the election of BN's candidate, more will be done for Kerdau. Syed Ibrahim has told me of his will to work as best he can.

"There are still those who need BN's help, and this victory will strengthen our resolve to serve all races in Kerdau," he said, putting down the victory to Najib's leadership, the teamwork of all BN component parties and the hard work put in the candidate himself.

Syed Ibrahim, who appeared overwhelmed by the sudden media attention and the big win handed to him today, had little to say apart from echoing Adnan's pledge to do more work for the people.

"I feel humbled by this win, and it is a big responsibility for me. Among the issues raised by the voters is their welfare, and their daily needs. This must be improved and as our menteri besar said, our service goes out to all levels," he said.

The 1Malaysia factor

Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor meanwhile trumpeted the victory as the success story of Najib's 1Malaysia concept that he says is getting the "backing and support" of the rakyat.

We are very happy with the results, and we hope the people will give us more support in future," he said.

When asked if this was a good indicator for BN going into the upcoming Sarawak state polls, he simply laughed and said, "I hope so."

Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein however admitted that they did not do as well as

they had hoped in Kerdu town, the only ethnically mixed area in the constituency.

"There was an increase. I would have loved it to go a bit higher, but I believe we need to prove a bit more in translating the vision of 1Malaysia and also to make sure when we say 'rakyat didahulukan' (people first), it involves all the rakyat in Malaysia," he said.

Health Minister and MCA deputy president however was more optimistic of the results, saying that it shows the Chinese community is coming back to support BN.

In the Kerdu polling district, the only area with a substantial Chinese presence, BN trounced PAS 428 to 216.

"... this is a very sure, very clear sign that Chinese votes are returning to BN. The people in Kerdu have spoken. They fully support the 1Malaysia concept and they are very confident with the state and federal governments.

"They are looking forward to more development and the country's transformation programme. They are giving full support to our PM and 1Malaysia concept," he said.

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