

Pakatan will only win Putrajaya in 14th GE
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The next general election will not see the tsunami that Pakatan Rakyat hopes will take them to the seat of government in Putrajaya.

However, said political scientist Ong Kian Ming, the results will set the stage for a Pakatan takeover in the following 14th GE.

"BN will not get their two-thirds, but will lose ground in Johor, Sabah and Sarawak, to win 55 to 63 percent of the seats.

"I posit a post-election scenario where Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is challenged by Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin as Najib won't be able to take back Selangor or win two-thirds of Parliament," Ong (left) said.

Speaking at a forum in Bangsar, he said that if Muhyiddin takes over as prime minister, BN will be more "exclusive than inclusive".

"This and the worsening global economy will lead to 60 percent of the seats going to Pakatan in the 14th general election.

"The 13th general election is a set-up for when BN would lose power," he said at a forum organised by the Centre for Public Policy Studies.

Marginal seat impact

He added that Pakatan will see some losses in seats in the states it governs while BN is set to lose ground in Sabah, Sarawak and Johor, where the conditions are ripe for a "local tsunami".

Ong told the cosy discussion of about 30 people that a "local tsunami" for or against BN is expected if either coalition strategically places prominent candidates.

"Placing of candidates in strategic seats may swing sentiments from one party to the other, like move Mukhriz Mahathir from Jerlun and declare him as menteri besar candidate in Kedah.

"Make a prominent DAP leader with a prominent PAS leader contest in southern Johor, ripe for a big swing, and you can have a local tsunami. The same in Sabah and Sarawak," he said.

Ong added that the next elections will be one dictated by "subnational issues" as a considerable 37 percent of seats in Parliament are considered "marginal", where the slightest swing could impact on results.

Voters, too, he said are more "sophisticated" and "will not vote for either BN or the opposition just for the labels" but will look at not only individual candidates but also his or her party's position in a coalition.

"We won't have a situation like in 2008 where Loh Gwo Burne (right) in Kelana Jaya, who was voted in (as MP) just because he was the person who filmed the VK Lingam tapes.

"If such a person contests against a strong MCA candidate, the seat will be a danger for PKR.

"Voters will hold the parties to a higher standard of accountability," he said.

He said the tough fight foreseen will also see a greater role for independent candidates.

"Ong Tee Keat, if not fielded in Pandan, can act as a spoiler or negotiate with the opposition to win the seat as an Independent, taking away MCA's only Selangor seat," he said.

Christians and Indians

Also speaking at the forum was Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia researcher Denison Jayasooria, who said that a community to be watched is the Christian community, who faced several unfriendly policy decisions in the past years.

"This is not a national issue but can make an impact in Sabah and Sarawak," he said.

Denison (right) added that compared to 2008, the impact of the Indian vote is lower as there are no strong Indian leaders leading the change, including from Hindraf.

"The people want to feel respected and that their culture is important. The PM going to the Batu Caves wins a lot of hearts and votes, too.

"But many substantive issues of the Indian community are not addressed in ways they should have... RM500 here and RM100 there would not solve long-term disadvantages but would make a short-term impact," he said.

He added that the impact of cash handouts is not only seen among Indians but among the "sizeable number of voters at the bottom 40 percent of the economy, which cuts across ethnicity and religion".

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