

**PKR gung-ho on minimum 105 seats for Pakatan
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By Koh Jun Lin**

If the elections are called immediately, Pakatan Rakyat would win at least 105 parliamentary seats said PKR's strategy director Rafizi Ramli.

“We have improved! Five or six months ago, BN thought we might win 92 seats, and even then, they were worried.

“Months later when they studied this again, Umno itself knows that if it calls for an election now, they would face an opposition that has 105 seats from the start,” he said at the launch of the party's Selangor election campaign machinery today.

Rafizi (left) urged party workers to push for 10 more seats to secure a simple majority for Pakatan.

“We are confident of winning because we have witnessed the mood and the rise of the people outside (the party). It is not us, but the people are ready to win,” he said.

The 105 seats tally is seven short of an outright parliamentary majority to claim power.

Nevertheless, such a close result should destabilise BN enough to either create a possible round of defections as well as a change of leadership in the ruling coalition.

‘Go ahead, call GE now’

Meanwhile in his speech officiating the event at the Petaling Jaya Civic Hall, party deputy president Azmin Ali challenged Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to call for immediate elections.

“If Umno is strong as seen on television and newspapers (reporting) in (its 66th anniversary celebration) in Bukit Jalil, I challenge the prime minister to dissolve the Parliament tomorrow and call for fresh elections,” he said, to the applause of the 700 who gathered there.

However, he sarcastically cautioned his colleagues that Umno has a new wing – the Election Commission (EC).

He pointed out that between the last election and the latest electoral roll, the number of voters in Selangor has increased from 1,565,493 to 1,906,008, a jump of 340,515 new voters – the largest increment among the states.

Azmin (left), who is also the PKR elections director, urged the campaign workers especially the Youth wing to go to the ground to verify if these are genuine voters, because a large portion of the voters are young voters.

To aid their mission, he demonstrated the capabilities of the software Sistem Menang Pilihanraya (Sismep) 3.0 launched on May 11, which among other features, can highlight movements of voters between constituencies, voters above a specified age, and even point out their latest addresses on a map.

“Sismep is only effective if we make good use of it at the grassroots level,” he said.

Leaflet warfare

The government has until April next year to dissolve the 222-seat Parliament. However, many including Azmin, anticipate that it will be held as early as this June.

At today’s launch, thick volumes containing lists of voters who had been added, moved or removed in the electoral roll were given to division and branch election chiefs in seats where PKR plans to contest.

The launch is part of a series that has already covered Perak, Penang, Malacca and Negri Sembilan, with Kedah, Sabah and Sarawak scheduled for the coming week.

Other items distributed at the event were party paraphernalia such as caps and T-shirts, and a password-protected thumbdrive containing the Sismep 3.0 software, the 2011 fourth quarter electoral roll (the latest to be gazetted), a video from the Bersih 3.0 rally and soft copies of Pakatan Rakyat’s ‘Buku Jingga’ policy framework, photos of PKR senior leaders, and 13 sets of leaflets.

Rafizi said the leaflets are part of PKR’s strategy to keep BN on the defensive.

“If Pakatan Rakyat attacks BN from Day One of the election campaign period, and BN has to fend them off each day of campaigning, then God willing we will win,” he said.

If well-played, he said this would allow the people to focus on Pakatan Rakyat’s message while forcing BN to respond to it rather than the other way around, despite the ruling party’s control over the mainstream media.

A million of each of the 13 two-page leaflets will be printed by PKR’s central leadership, whilst the branch and division offices will print the rest as needed.

The leaflets highlight a range of issues. Some contain the coalition’s promises such as to lower fuel prices or to abolish the National Higher Education Fund (PTPTN).

Others are responses to Umno’s attacks such as allegations that PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim (right) is an Israeli agent. The rest attack BN on issues such as the National Feedlot Corporation scandal and the Scorpene submarines scandal.

Rafizi urged campaign managers to remind speakers to frequently make references to the leaflets

in hopes that listeners would at least read it, lest the funds spent printing it go to waste.

He added that the party's central leadership would be monitoring the campaign effort at every branch on a weekly basis, armed with a score-sheet.

Candidates still under wraps

At a press conference later, Azmin kept the party's election candidates list under wraps.

“Our political culture is very dirty and disgusting, where they could threaten and intimidate our candidates with all sorts of tricks and enticements.

“We will discuss and decide a suitable date to announce our candidates to avoid Umno and BN trickery,” he said.

Nonetheless, Azmin said a majority of the candidates will be fresh faces, and in his speech earlier pledged that the candidates would be vetted more carefully to avoid a repeat of the turncoats disaster that plagued the party shortly after the 2008 general election.

When asked about seat allocations, he said a decision is expected in the first week of June, with agreement on all but the last seat in most states presently to be resolved.

He added that Selangor is the first state where Pakatan Rakyat's seat allocation has been finalised.