

Kit Sang hopes for tsunami Johor-style
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Pakatan Rakyat is going for broke in Johor, convinced that while their presence in the state has been minuscule in the past, a 2008-style political tsunami may sweep BN away in the southern state.

"I feel confident that the winds of change are blowing sufficiently strongly in Johor so much so that it will no longer be a BN 'fixed deposit' in GE13," said DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang in a statement today.

Lim along with DAP and PAS heavyweights are leading the charge in the Umno stronghold, fielding senior leaders mainly in the south of the state.

He explained that Pakatan's goal is to win six parliamentary and 13 state seats in south Johor, to make a total of 19 parliamentary and 30 state seats in total.

The veteran leader reckoned that past vote swings have allowed the opposition to make gains, and if these are big enough, may allow the opposition to win the state, like they did in Selangor in 2008

Recalling the latter state's experience, Lim said from 1995 to 2004 the opposition was but a blip in the industrial state, where even in the 1999 general election at the height of the reformasi movement, they won only six out of 48 state seats.

The 2008 political tsunami saw their popular support surge 21 points from 34 percent in 2004 to 55 percent, sweeping 17 out of 22 parliamentary seats and 36 out of 56 state seats, heralding a Pakatan Selangor government for the first time in history.

Lim believes there is no reason why what happened in Selangor in 2008 cannot happen in Johor in 2013.

"The BN can no longer guarantee a clean sweep of all or almost all of the parliamentary and state seats," he said.

'Groundswell gaining momentum'

Lim argued that there have been shifts in the voting patterns in Johor in the past.

While the vote swing between 1999 and 2008 was not big enough to bring Pakatan to victory in the south, it may be priming for another groundswell.

"BN's support in Johor fell from 76 percent in 1995 to 73 percent in 1999. It fell by 10 percent from 75 percent in 2004 to 65 percent in 2008."

Johor, said Lim, also saw a significant increase in the number of new, mostly young voters, with 450,000 new registrations making up over a fifth of total voters in the state, of which over half are young voters.

He contends that these are the voters who will vote according to the new political realities of today and not be tied down to past voting patterns and habits in Johor.

Lim and Pakatan are banking on these young swing voters to decide who governs in Putrajaya and also who controls Johor in the future.

“I am confident that a majority of them will vote for change, that they will vote for Pakatan and that they will vote for a better and brighter future for Johor and all Malaysia,” said Lim.

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