

Sabah Pakatan's four in the bag won't meet federal target

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SABAH Pakatan's '10 Sabah+10 Sarawak+10 Johor' formula to Putrajaya may need to be re-jigged come polling day as winds of change seem to be blowing less strongly in the lands below the wind.

With 48 hours left to polling day, Pakatan and its allies are looking at a probable '4+4+1' formula - four in the bag, four marginal and one from another non-BN party.

Seats which Pakatan is confident of taking are Kota Kinabalu, Tawau, Sandakan and Beaufort, the latter due to Lajim Ukin's strong influence.

A sudden surge in campaign momentum in Kota Kinabalu has seen several thousands flock to DAP events in the past two days, indicating that support for the party is still solid.

Meanwhile, the Muslim bumiputera who constitute half of the Tawau voters, made up most of the over 5000-strong crowd who attended a PKR rally last week, and are likely to back PKR's Kong Hong Ming.

Marginal seats dot the west coast, with Tuaran - which neighbours the state capital - still a climb for incumbent and now PKR candidate Wilfred Bumburing due to in-fighting and differing sentiments along racial lines. Other 50-50 seats are:

Kota Marudu

Maximus Ongkili (BN) vs Maijol Mahap (PKR) vs two others

The 'Ini kali lah' tremors, which pass through Tuaran from the epicentre in Kota Kinabalu, is faint in Kota Belud, the birthplace of Sabah Umno. Travel further north to Kota Marudu, however, and it reappears.

NONEA united Pakatan front, local dissatisfaction and the church make a potent mix which is shaking the ground for incumbent contender Maximus Ongkili (right).

The church ("underground campaigners" as one Pakatan leader said) plays a significant part in this mostly-Christian rural constituency, where bumiputera

worshippers pay homage in Bahasa Malaysia and are noted to use the word 'Allah' as well.

In fact, churches and Christian organisations provided the chairs for the Pakatan rally when organisers failed to source them from the local council, and are moving service to Saturday to allow worshippers to vote on Sunday.

Penampang

Bernard Giluk Dompok (BN) vs Ignatius Dorell Leiking (PKR) vs Melanie Annol (Star)

NONEA Kadazandusun Murut area within the Kota Kinabalu city limits, Penampang is tipped by pundits as the most likely of the Kadazandusun Murut seats to go to Pakatan.

But heavyweight federal minister Bernard Dompok (left) is not going down without a fight, and has even gone as far as enlisting once nemesis and now ally PBS president Joseph Pairin Kitingan to campaign for him.

In the community where peer influence and personality is key, Dompok has enlisted a strong entourage to spread a whispering campaign against the hudud issue, to the detriment of first-time PKR candidate Ignatius Dorell Leiking.

NONEA Dompok is also trumping Leiking (right) by making bold statements to safeguard the community's interest - defending the use of the word 'Allah' by Christians and calling for the re-issuance of identity cards for Sabahans.

Falling into the trap to defend Anwar, Leiking's campaign missed the opportunity to take on Dompok guns blazing earlier in the campaign.

Compared to seasoned and bold Dompok, young lawyer Leiking and fresh-faced Terence Siambun - who is contesting the state seat of Moyog there - are seen by some voters as "little boys".

But Penampang's younger, urban sophisticated voters may still view Dompok with suspicion, and with popular DAP candidate Dr Edwin Bosi pulling in votes from the state constituency of Kapayan, hope may still be high for PKR in Penampang.

Keningau

Joseph Pairin Kitingan (BN) vs Jeffrey Kitingan (Star) vs Stephen Sandor (PKR)

A battle between brothers is bound to make headlines, but this time, Star president Jeffrey Kitingan has an even chance of beating his older brother.

NONEIt would mean a serious upset if Pairin - who is the Kadazandusun Murut paramount leader - is toppled, but the villages in the interior areas appear taken by Jeffrey's 'Sabah for Sabahans' cry.

Campaigners claim that villages where Jeffrey (right) was not allowed to enter in 2008 are now hosts for his ceramah.

Going by the flags put up by villagers in their own front yards, Jeffrey's star might shine brighter come May 5.

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