

Will Pakatan retain 11 out of 12 seats in KL?

MalaysiaKini.com

May 3, 2013

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FT ANALYSIS In 2008, the Federal Territories led the way, resulting in the 2008 tsunami, when 11 out of 12 parliament seats in Kuala Lumpur fell to the opposition Pakatan Rakyat coalition.

Five years later, the question as we approach the pivotal polling day on Sunday is whether BN can recapture some or all of the seats this time around, or will Pakatan manage a clean sweep.

Analytically, Pakatan is expected to retain most parts of Kuala Lumpur and the deciding factor could very well be should Pakatan organise a mega-ceramah either today or tomorrow as had already been seen in other states nationwide.

For the DAP which is contesting in Kepong, Seputeh, Cheras, Segambut and Bukit Bintang, it would be a foregone conclusion that BN will not make any headway there.

Some of the keenly-contested seats include Lembah Pantai, Wangsa Maju, Titiwangsa, Bandar Tun Razak, Putrajaya, Labuan, Batu and Setiawangsa.

Lembah Pantai

Incumbent Nurul Izzah Anwar, a PKR vice-president, is truly facing a danger in losing her seat with the additional 16,500 voters in her constituency, and this time around she is facing a three-way fight with Federal Territories Minister Raja Nong Chik Raja Zainal Abidin and Independent Rusli Baba.

In the last general election, Nurul Izzah won with a majority of 2,895 majority in Lembah Pantai, and this time around the additional voters, of whom she claimed 5,000 are phantom voters, may work against her favour.

The 32-year-old mother of two admitted she is the underdog following having to face two ministers - namely Shahrizat Abdul Jalil in 2008 and Raja Nong Chik or RNC as he is fondly known this time around. RNC has been working hard in transforming the constituency, especially the low-cost flats.

Analysts also say that the Indian votes have slightly returned to BN due to developments such as the Hindu Rights Action Force signing a memorandum of

understanding with the ruling coalition.

NONE However, Bersih 2.0 co-chairperson Ambiga Sreenevasan's (at microphone in photo) presence at some of Nurul Izzah's ceramah, like what was seen in Brickfields and Lucky Gardens, may result in the Indian community, which accounts for 20 percent of the 72,553 voters, to vote for Pakatan.

As a result it is too close to call as Nurul Izzah has the backing of the upper and middle class in the mixed area, while RNC on the other hand derives his support from the low-cost and KL City Hall flats. Either Nurul or RNC is expected to win by a slim margin.

Titiwangsa

Dr Lo' Lo' Ghazali of PAS is a hard act to follow and her shocking death due to lung cancer in July 2008 was a big loss for the Titiwangsa residents.

In the last general election, PAS won by a majority of 1,972 and this time around the Islamist party has placed lawyer Ahmad Zamri Asa'ad Khuzaimi, who is also Federal Territory PAS deputy commissioner, as a candidate against Titiwangsa Umno division leader Johari Abdul Ghani.

NONE Caretaker Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat (centre in photo) was present to lend his support to Ahmad Zamri on Wednesday night and his presence at Kelab Sultan Sulaiman had resulted in a turnout of close to 6,000 people, which mainly consisted of people from surrounding areas and from outside KL.

Certainly, Dr Lo' Lo's job is unfinished, including the plight of the Kampung Baru voters, and Ahmad Zamri at 37, despite coming from Kampung Baru, has big shoes to fill following her sudden loss.

Johari, who hails from Kampung Pandan, is a certified accountant who has been leading the Umno division since 2010, and will pose a big obstacle for the young Ahmad Zamri. However, the PAS candidate, when met, said his chances are good.

Wangsa Maju

The constituency became a household name when its incumbent Wee Choo Keong was one of the first to leave PKR to become a BN-friendly Independent. The seat also has the distinction of being one of those having the smallest majorities in 2008 when Wee beat Yeow Teong Look from the MCA by 150 votes.

And with an increase of voters from 54,509 in 2008 to 67,858 at present, the merest breeze or sneeze can swing the voter either way. But the candidates facing off this time around are different as PKR is fielding Dr Tan Kee Kwong in the Malay-majority seat, while BN has its Umno division chief Mohd Shafei Abdullah.

NONETan (centre in photo), a veteran politician and former deputy minister who rose to prominence in Gerakan before joining PKR, has been active in helping the opposition party campaign against the recent Felda listing and other issues. Mohd Shafei is a local and Wangsa Maju BN chairperson, who is also caretaker Prime Minister Mohd Najib Abdul Razak's political secretary.

He is one of four of Najib aide being fielded as candidates in what may be seen as a move to shore up support for the PM inside BN and Umno by putting his supporters in prominent positions.

While Tan may have to content with those angry at Wee's betrayal, Mohd Shafei also faces dissent in the ranks as MCA has come out to voice its disappointment with having to surrender the seat to Umno, and sabotage may be a real concern.

Bandar Tun Razak

The parliamentary seat bears the name of BN chairperson Najib's father, and is one of the new townships developed around the federal capital of Kuala Lumpur. In 2008 Abdul Khalid Ibrahim from PKR captured the seat in a contest against former deputy home affairs minister Tan Chai Ho of MCA with a majority of 2,515 votes.

NONEFacing off against Khalid (left) this time around is Tan's son Tan Kok Eng. The seat is seen to be on shaky ground as media reports have shown that locals are complaining that Khalid, who is also Selangor menteri besar, was rarely seen on the ground.

He has a service centre there but not much of him is seen, reports say. Bandar Tun Razak is a Malay majority seat with Malays comprising 52 percent of the 91,136 total electorate while Chinese make up 37 percent and Indians nine percent.

Also in the race are two Bandar Tun Razak Umno divisional leaders, Mohamad Sukeri Abdul Samat and Mokhtar Salahudin, who were sacked from the party and may cause a split in the Malay votes, thus reducing Khalid's support. If this is the case, then Kok Eng, should he summon just a tad of his father's past support and secure the Chinese votes and the pro-BN Malay support, may defeat Khalid.

Whichever side wins, the majority may be slight.

Putrajaya

The federal administrative capital of Malaysia, and a BN bastion populated mostly by civil servants, is seen as sure win for the coalition. Its incumbent is two-term MP Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, who reportedly boasted that he cannot lose as the electorate are mainly government employees.

The numbers however speak a different story as Tengku Adnan, who is also the Umno secretary-general, only won with a majority of 2,734 against PAS' Mohammad Nor Mohamad in the 2008 elections, even less than the 3,546 majority he had won against PKR's Abdul Rahman Othman in 2004.

The scales could tip Pakatan's way even with parachuted candidate Husam Musa, a PAS vice-president from Kelantan, who, as Tengku Adnan puts it, is "unfamiliar with the situation and administration" of the federal administrative capital.

Civil servants make up a big portion of the middle class and studies have shown that new voters have a tendency to vote Pakatan, while a recent Merdeka Centre study also show that support among Malays towards the BN is waning.

The greatest indication of this may be the high number of attendees at the Pakatan ceramah in Putrajaya featuring PAS heavyweights like spiritual adviser Nik Abdul Aziz and popular religious preacher Ustaz Azhar Idrus. This led to the BN scrambling to field its own heavyweights like former PM Dr Mahathir Mohamad in its own ceramah soon after.

Labuan

Labuan sees a contest between PKR's Ibrahim Menudin, a former Sabah Umno treasurer, against Umno's Rosman Isli and PAS's Hadnan Mohamad.

Hadnan has however, reputedly withdrawn, paving the way for a straight fight between Ibrahim and Rosman.

Although BN obtained a majority in excess of 8,000 in 2008, this time around it is expected to be lowered following the familiarity of the electorate with Ibrahim.

Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/228934>