

BN has to keep marginal seats to retake Selangor

MalaysiaKini.com

May 4, 2013

By Ram Anand

GE13 WATCH SELANGOR While the ruling BN coalition has repeatedly stated its confidence of regaining Selangor, the country's richest state, they will need to ensure that at least nine marginal seats stay in its grasp before chipping away at Pakatan Rakyat-held seats.

BN won 24 of the 56 seats in the state legislative assembly at the 2008 general election, but nine of those seats were won with a slight majority, ranging from a mere 45 to 700 votes.

umno selangor najib muhyiddin event anti pak lah banners 160408 05BN needs five more state seats to be added to its 2008 tally in order to form a simple majority for a state government, but should they lose four of the marginal seats they are currently holding due to slight voter swings, especially in areas close to an urban populace, Pakatan could win a two-thirds majority, improving on the 32 state seats they won previously.

There are 12 state seats in Selangor that were won with a marginal majority. The smallest margin of victory was in seven state seats where the majority was fewer than 500 votes - five of them belonging to BN and two to Pakatan.

The smallest majority in a state seat in Selangor was in Sri Serdang, an urban seat which falls under the Puchong parliamentary constituency.

Former Selangor opposition leader Satim Diman, who has not been picked as a candidate this time, won by merely 45 votes against PAS' Ahmad Idzam Ahmad in 2008. He has been replaced by Mohamad Yusof Mohamed Eosin, a choice that would have stirred some discontent as Satim was known to have served the constituency since 1995.

Noor Hanim Ismail will represent PAS for the state seat this time around, but the chances are there for Pakatan to chip away at this BN state seat factoring in an additional vote swing from the Chinese community, which across the country have become even more vocal in their support for the opposition.

Malays make up 46 percent of voters in the seat, with Chinese forming 36 percent and Indians 16 percent. A recent study showed that Chinese and Malays favour Pakatan more than BN, at least as far as the state administration is concerned.

NONE Another marginal seat is the Sekinchan state seat which falls under the Sungai Besar parliamentary constituency - where the now popular Ng Suee Lim (centre in photo) of DAP scraped through with a 190-vote majority against MCA's Puah Boon Choon.

Kek Seng Hooi will do battle against Ng this time, but the latter's rising popularity and oratory skills, which have made him a prominent personality in the Selangor state assembly, could translate into even more support for DAP in this largely fishing community.

This is a Chinese-majority seat, which Chinese making up 57 percent of the voters, followed by Malays at 39 percent and Indians at 2 percent.

More hopeful in northern Selangor

But BN chances appear better in some semi-urban or rural areas in northern Selangor, such as the Sabak and Sungai Ayer Tawar state seats, both of which fall under the Sabak Bernam parliamentary constituency.

Both these seats were contested by PAS in 2008, and BN won both with a slim majority - 123 votes in Sungai Ayer Tawar and 117 votes in Sabak.

These two seats have an overwhelming Malay population - there are 83 percent Malays in Sungai Ayer Tawar and 79 percent in Sabak.

NONE Should there be a marginal vote swing among Malays in favour of Pakatan, both these seats could fall to them, as BN is fielding new faces to defend the seats - incumbents Raja Ideris Raja Ahmad (Sungai Ayer Tawar) and Worno Dogol (Sabak) were not picked again.

BN's confidence that Indian votes have returned to the ruling coalition's fold could also tip the balance in the Bukit Melawati state seat that is currently held by PKR.

This is the only marginal state seat with a crucial Indian voter base - 30 percent against 57 percent Malays and 12 percent Chinese.

PKR currently hold this seat via M Muthiah who won with a majority of only 297 votes, but he has been replaced by S Manikavasagam, the well-known former Kapar MP who will attempt to use his personality to solidify Indian support for himself in this state seat.

However, Manikavasagam does not have direct competition for the Indian votes, as MIC has "loaned" the state seat to Umno, which is fielding Jakiran Jacomah there.

There are also two state seats under the Kuala Langat parliamentary seat, Teluk Datuk and Morib, which were won by DAP and BN respectively on marginal differences.

Teluk Datuk was won by DAP's Philip Tan Choon Swee by 698 votes, but with this being a Chinese-majority seat at 45 percent of voters, DAP could rely on an increased Chinese support to retain the seat. However both MCA and DAP are fielding new faces for the seat, which might hinder both campaigns there.

Morib, the neighbouring state seat, is a Malay-majority seat with 59 percent Malay voters, and was won by BN's Hasiman Sidom by 286 votes. Hasiman is defending his seat.

New voters may affect race

Three other marginal state seats, Paya Jaras in Subang and Kuang and Taman Templer in Selayang, are all located in relatively urban seats - and are all held by BN with slim margins.

All three are Malay-majority seats, with Taman Templer being the smallest of them - with 51 percent Malay voters.

Permatang, a state seat under Tanjong Karang which is largely seen as a BN stronghold, is held by BN's Sulaiman Razak with a 608-vote majority. Sulaiman is defending the seat.

NONEThe other marginal state seat is Kuala Kubu Bharu, won by MCA's Wong Koon Mun by 448 votes in 2008. However, MCA is fielding Jessie Ooi (left), the famous 'tow truck' lady, in the seat against DAP's Lee Kee Hiong, who is also contesting for the first time.

The presence of three Independent candidates in this state seat could make the complexion of this seat a little unpredictable.

The existing marginal seats needs to be kept by BN in order to use it as a springboard to chip away at other Pakatan-held state seats, and the locations and compositions of these seats might make it tricky for the ruling coalition to hold on to these seats.

A major unknown is how the 400,000 new voters in Selangor will affect the race, with Pakatan expressing fears that many of them are planted in the state to secure a BN victory.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/229033>