

## **Pakatan Perak win with simple majority possible**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**May 4, 2013**

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ANALYSIS PERAK After two weeks of aggressive campaigning, perhaps over the past two years, Pakatan Rakyat is expected to regain the silver state with a simple majority and contribute another two parliamentary seats on their way to Putrajaya.

However, capturing the two parliamentary seats of Lumut and Sungai Siput remain uncertain.

NONEThe 2008 general election saw Pakatan Rakyat snaring 31 state seats out of 59 to form the state government, but could only take 11 of 24 parliamentary seats.

For this round, a conservative estimation is that Pakatan can win the five marginal seats of Pengkalan Baru, Manjoi, Sungai Rapat, Kubu Gajah and Selama.

PAS is contesting these seats, with Manjoi and Sungai Rapat close to downtown Ipoh, and three others located in semi-rural areas.

But the opposition coalition might lose Behrang in the Tanjung Malim parliamentary constituency, in the four-cornered fight due to PKR's weak machinery.

While retaining their existing seats, they are eyeing the Kuala Kangsar and Larut parliamentary constituencies.

Malay constituencies are the main battlegrounds for both PAS and Umno.

NONEWhichever party is able to maintain its current support of the Malay electorate and is successful in wooing the young Malay voter will control the state.

PAS' confidence comes from its well-oiled machinery and Chinese voters within the Malay constituencies whose anti-establishment sentiments had gone deeper since the power grab of four years ago.

According to Pakatan, they need to get 43 percent of the Malay, 75 percent of the Chinese and 40 percent of the Indian votes across the board to win the polls.

But Perak BN chief Zambry Abdul Kadir and deputy chief Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah remain confident that BN can retain Perak, without giving specifics on the number of seats they can take.

Husni even said that BN will regain its two-thirds majority in Parliament.

The marginal seats expected to fall into PAS hands are:

Pengkalan Baru

slim majority in perak update 040209Abdul Manap Hashim (BN) vs Khairuddin Abd Malik (PAS) vs Ahmad Nizam Ibrahim (Independent)

PAS only lost by 14 votes for the state seat under the Beruas parliamentary constituency in the last election, which was also the lowest majority nationwide.

The Chinese support for PAS was discouraging with only 52 percent, perhaps due to the stereotype image of the Islamic party going for implementation of hudud laws and Islamic state.

With DAP and PAS joining hands under Pakatan Rakyat, incumbent Beruas MP Ngeh Koo Ham should be able to boost the community's support for Khairudin.

Manjoi

Mohamad Ziad Mohamed (BN) vs Asmuni Awi (PAS)

Losing by only 348 votes, PAS is exerting a lot of effort in the state seat with seven Malay kampungs and residential areas. The electorate strength of the constituency since then had risen by 50 percent with the majority being Malay.

NONEAsmuni (right) had been keeping his ground work going since the last election and successfully persuaded an influential local Umno branch chief to quit the party in favour of PAS.

Although Ziad is the Tambun Umno division treasurer, it is learnt that he is not a local.

Kubu Gajah

Ahmad Hasbullah Alias (BN) vs Mohd Nazrin Din (PAS)

Selama

Mohamad Daud Mohd Yusoff (BN) vs Mohd Akmal Kamarudin (PAS)

Both constituencies are within the Larut parliamentary constituency, where the party is fielding former Bukit Aman CID director Mohd Fauzi Shaari.

Larut is next to Bagan Serai and close to Parit Buntar which is in the PAS' stronghold of Kerian district.

PAS candidates only lost by slim majorities and recovered soon enough to become active again.

But PKR's relatively weak campaign machinery may not help the party to snatch Batu Kurau, the third state seat under Larut.

Below are the parliamentary seats where the chances are 50-50:

Lumut: Kong Cho Ha (BN) vs Mohamad Imran Abdul Hamid (PKR)

It's still hard to say whether Imran can win the hearts of the army personnel in the Lumut naval base after serving for 37 years.

NONEBased on the last election results, Lumut showed a minor split in voting where BN got 25,698 votes for the parliamentary seat, but only 22,278 in total in the three state seats of Pasir Panjang, Pangkor and Sitiawan.

Pasir Panjang and Sitiawan had seen an increase of around 9,000 and 5,000 new voters respectively.

Given that Sitiawan is a DAP bastion, BN needs to win over 77 percent of the new voters in Pasir Panjang to ensure that MCA is not forced to keep its promise of not taking part in the cabinet should its results be worse than previously.

Sungai Siput: SK Devamany (BN) vs Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj vs SP Nagalingam

This is a battle between resources and community empowerment service. Although it appears to project great disparity, the fight is still neck-and-neck till today.

There is a Malay-majority seat, Lintang, under Sungai Siput, but the constituents there seem as though they hardly know their mind.

Who will be the winner of this hot seat is also dependant on the 22 percent Indian electorate.

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