

Ramkarpal says he was not pressured to contest
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The newly announced Bukit Gelugor candidate Ramkarpal Singh said he was not pressured to contest for the parliamentary seat left by his late father, Karpal Singh.

"I feel proud to be given that opportunity and I will try my level best to be successful in this campaign," he said when met at DAP's operations centre in Jalan Masjid Negeri today.

Ramkarpal expressed confidence in retaining the Bukit Gelugor seat despite DAP leaders' packed schedule since the Teluk Intan by-election is on May 31, with May 19 being nomination day.

"I understand that they will be busy but I am confident that the 13 days campaign would run smoothly," he added.

Ramkarpal said the constituency was very sentimental about him as it was won thrice since 2004 by his father.

In the May 5 general election last year, Karpal triumphed with a 41,778 majority over MCA's Teh Beng Yeam.

On issue he expects to face during the campaign, Ramkarpal zoomed in on two - Kelantan's implementation of hudud law and persecution of opposition leaders under the Sedition Act.

"These are big issues which need to be considered and debated," said Karpal's third son.

"We must convince the voters, not only in Bukit Gelugor, and this by-election seems like a platform to test the voters' views on these issues, so many issues will be brought up," he added.

Ramkarpal said he hopes to achieve a higher majority in this polls, saying it can be achieved with the hard work and collective efforts of Pakatan allies like PAS and PKR.

He is unfazed facing a multi-cornered fight against Parti Cinta Malaysia's Huan Cheng Guan, independents Yacoob Mohd Noor and Mohamed Nabi Bux, who is supposedly a PAS member from Selangor but the party has denied it.

The MCA has announced it will not be contesting the by-election, saying that it wants to focus on ensuring that the hudud law is not implemented although PAS intends to table a Private Members Bill on the Islamic criminal law.

"A clean and fair fight is the priority, DAP is still confident of victory despite the multi-cornered fight," Ramkarpal said.

A nature lover

He has practised law for 14 years, working in his family legal firms in Penang and Kuala Lumpur. He is single and a graduate of Britain's Bristol University.

Ramkarpal is a nature lover and hiked up Mount Kinabalu just two months ago.

Asked about his mother, Gurmit Kaur's (centre in photo) response to his candidacy, he said, "My mom only said two words - work hard".

"It's my father's motto as well and that is what I intend to do," he said.

He said his father left him many tips which will prove useful during the campaign as he had the opportunity to experience and see first hand how he had handled issues.

"I remember his work ethics, the way he went about things, his professionalism... these are all priceless values he left behind that I had the opportunity to learn from him," he said.

Has he ever thought of becoming a politician when he was a child?

"There is no doubt that he had always been interested in politics. Of course being an MP is a huge responsibility," he added.

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