

**Ramkarpal says DAP will counter Nabi Bux's hudud**  
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BUKIT GELUGOR DAP's candidate Ramkarpal Singh is not in the least threatened by the "Hudud in Penang 2020" campaign of his opponent, Mohamed Nabi Bux Mohd Nabi Sathar.

He does not consider Nabi Bux's campaign to be a threat to the DAP, even as the party strongly opposes the implementation of the Islamic penal code that its ally PAS is seeking.

The PAS proposal to table a Private Member's Bill in Parliament next month to push for the implementation of hudud in Kelantan has been shelved in light of the federal government-Kelantan state joint technical committee on the matter.

"Obviously, everyone in this election will have a theme and he will play up on it. But we are able to counter that and I don't think it will be a problem," Ramkarpal said in an interview with Malaysiakini at his Western Road home.

"Hudud is an issue that concerns the Malays, but it is also an issue that concerns everybody else. This is something we have to go to the ground on, and explain to the people what our stand is," he said.

"Generally speaking, there are many moderate Malays who we appeal to. They are the people who want a better Malaysia and we can convince them, just as we convinced them before that the way to go forward is to have better representation in Parliament."

Ramkarpal is expected to retain the Bukit Gelugor parliamentary seat in the May 25 by-election. The seat fell vacant with the death of his father, Karpal Singh, in a tragic road accident on April 17.

Karpal won the seat in three consequent general elections, and on May 5 last year, retained it with a thumping 41,778-vote majority over MCA's Teh Beng Yeam.

Other than Nabi Bux, the others in the running are Parti Cinta Malaysia vice-president Huan Cheng Guan and another Independent candidate, lawyer Abu Backer Sidek Mohammad Zan.

So far, Ramkarpal has been happy with the response from the Malay community to his campaign, even in places he thought were "danger areas", such as Ayer Itam's Kampung Melayu.

"We had a very good response there. We opened one of our operations centres there and went to meet the people at the pasar malam (night market). Nothing is perfect, but we are trying to reach out as far as possible," Karpal's third son said.

'I'm not taking anything for granted'

Despite the overwhelming support for the DAP from the local Chinese community, Ramkarpal is not taking anything for granted.

As far as he is concerned, the party needs the support of all communities and he declared that he would attend to every complaint, from any community, seriously.

"We cannot depend on one community and neglect the others. That is certainly not my way of doing it," added the 38-year-old lawyer.

Meanwhile, a survey of Malay traders and voters in the constituency by KiniTV showed a mixed response to the election campaign in the Chinese majority constituency.

"I am not going to vote. DAP is sure to win, we can't do anything. It's over. Barisan (Nasional) did not contest," said a trader, who only wished to go by the name Mie, in the Malay majority area of Taman Tun Sardon.

"I will not vote because BN is not contesting. I am not satisfied. They talk and talk but when they know they will lose, they do not want to contest. Why don't they contest? Win or lose is normal," he said.

Another trader, Hardi Ismail, expressed hope that one of the Malay independent candidates would win the polls by, saying "unbelievers and communists", want to take over Malay land.

He is not convinced that Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has defended Islam, as he often claimed, saying those were "100 percent lies".

"Karpal was also the same. He did not do any work. People voted him because he was a communist," Hardi added.

Abdul Wahab, also a trader, is resigned to the fact that no matter which party wins, the Muslims will have to protect their religious practices.

"We are used to it. They are Chinese and we remain the same. The most important thing is that we continue to practise our faith. God willing, we will be protected," he said.

On the chances of an Independent candidate winning the seat, Abdul Wahab said, "They are all mosquitos and can't do anything (for us)."