

PKR wants Anwar to vote in Pmtg Pauh polls

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By Low Chia Ming

PKR wants the Home Ministry to allow its defacto leader Anwar Ibrahim to vote in the Permatang Pauh polls on May 7.

"We welcome Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's plan to work out a mechanism to allow prisoners to vote, don't tell me it takes a year to work out such move," said his daughter and Lembah Pantai MP Nurul Izzah Anwar.

She was referring to Zahid's statement in 2013 that his ministry was in discussion with the police and the Election Commission to allow prisoners to exercise their right to vote.

Anwar is serving a five year prison term for a sodomy conviction and lost his seat when he failed to obtain a pardon.

His wife and PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, 63, has taken his place to contest the by-election against three candidates including BN's Suhaimi Sabudin, 44.

But Anwar is not the only voter that PKR is worried about.

PKR Gopeng MP Lee Boon Chye (left) said based on previous experience and election results, outstation voters will play a crucial role in ensuring victory for the seat.

He cited the example of the Teluk Intan by-election, where Gerakan president Mah Siew Kong won by a razor thin majority of 238 to DAP's Dyana Sofya Mohd Daud.

"It shows we can't take this lightly, it should be a lesson to us," Lee said in Sama Gagah today.

"Although BN votes in Teluk Intan only slightly increased, there were less outstation voters who came back and voted for us.

"So we hope it won't happen again and we advise voters to make early arrangements to come back to Permatang Pauh," he stressed.

Outstation votes crucial

DAP National vice-chairman and Ipoh Barat MP M Kula Segaran recalled that BN won Teluk Intan in 1995 national polls with a majority of 13,968 votes.

However, during the 1997 by-election, Kula Segaran (left) had won the seat for DAP with a majority of 2,916 votes.

"During that time, the impact of outstation voters was vital," he said.

Both DAP and PKR estimated outstation voters at about 6,000 out of the 70,000-odd voters.

PKR operation centre main coordinator Law Vhoo Kiang reminded voters to return home to vote, saying the party would reach out to these voters via social media and telephone calls.

"Certain quarters say there is no need to return home to as this by-election is irrelevant and would not change the national political landscape," he explained.

"But it is exactly the opposite as voters can send an important message to the people by giving PKR a victory in this seat," he added.

"If BN wins, they will claim the people support GST and are satisfied with the BN's way of managing the national economy.

"There are also people saying since GST has been implemented, it is too late to oppose it.

"However can still express our grievances and show we do not support the tax," he asserted.