

**PAS veep: We may lose Kelantan**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**May 17, 2007**  
**Beh Lih Yi and Muda Mohd Noor**

Islamic party PAS is staring at the face of defeat. It is increasingly worried that Kelantan, which it has ruled for nearly two decades, will fall into the hands of its adversary, Umno.

At present, PAS is clinging on to power with a single seat majority in the state. The party controls 23 seats while Umno 22.

However, party vice-president Husam Musa claimed that PAS could be shown the exit because of electoral malpractices and not due to a loss of support from the people.

He predicts that electoral irregularities, such as the manipulation of the electoral roll and multiple voting, will happen in the coming general election if no action is taken now.

"We're finished, nobody can survive... Nobody can..." he said in an interview with malaysiakini earlier this week when asked on the chances of his party in recapturing the state.

The next general election is not due until April 2009 but political pundits have anticipated an early election to be called between late this year and March next year.

Kelantan has been under the control of PAS since the Islamic party first came into power after the 1990 general election but suffered a major setback in the last national polls in 2004.

In addition, the party also lost its hold over neighbouring Terengganu, which it won for the first time in the 1999 general election.

### **Dr M's time was better**

Husam, who is widely speculated to be tapped as the next menteri besar for Kelantan, said the election irregularities involving high voter turnout were not really evident until the last general election - the first under Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"This did not happen during (ex-premier Dr) Mahathir's (Mohamad) time. No matter how bad it was under Mahathir, this trend (high voter turnout) only started in the 2004 general election," said the state exco member.

He argued that now there are more allegations of irregularities especially with the dramatic increase in voter turnout as seen in the last general election and subsequent by-elections, except for Batu Talam, where the opposition staged a boycott.

He claimed that there was an on-going exercise to 'remove' PAS supporters from the electoral roll to be replaced by supporters of its rival parties and outsiders.

However, he said, this could not be detected or confirmed until the nomination day when contesting parties are given a copy of the principal electoral roll, which cannot be challenged in court since an amendment to the Election Act was made in 2002.

The amendment was carried out after an election court nullified the election results for Likas,

Sabah in 2001, on the ground that its electoral roll was illegal and contained phantom voters. The amendment removed all legal avenues for parties to challenge the roll's credibility.

Husam also claimed that the principal electoral roll differed from the supplementary electoral roll displayed in public places and certified every three months.

"The number of voters can remain the same. Let's say there are 15,000 voters in a constituency - they can remove PAS supporters from the electoral roll and replace them with new voters or 'designed voters'.

"This happened in Selangor during the last general election where 128,000 voters could not vote on polling day although they voted in the 1999 general election. When they found this out on polling day, they could not do anything," he said.

### Prepare for the worst

On the issue of multiple voting, he recalled PAS' defeat in Terengganu in 2004 where Barisan Nasional supposedly gained an extra 93,000 votes despite the opposition's votes being reduced by only 9,000 votes compared to the previous election.

"This is a real threat to us, not just imagination. It has been proven in Terengganu and Selangor in the last general election as well as the recent Ijok by-election," he said.

Husam is puzzled why despite an increase of votes for the opposition in some of the recent by-elections, the BN still won.

Increase in voters				
Constituency	Parties	2004 General Election	By-election	+/- Votes
Pengkalan Pasir December 2005	<b>BN</b>	7,112	7,422	+310
	<b>PAS</b>	7,168	7,288	+130
	<b>Independent</b>	-	415	-
	<b>Turnout</b>	77.6%	83.04%	+5.44%
Machap April 2007	<b>BN</b>	5,847	5,533	-314
	<b>DAP</b>	1,285	1,452	+167
	<b>Turnout</b>	74.33%	74.35%	+0.02%
Ijok April 2007	<b>BN</b>	5,213	5,884	+671
	<b>PKR</b>	3,564	4,034	+470
	<b>Independent</b>	313	-	-
	<b>Turnout</b>	76.17%	83.08%	+6.91%

Source: Malaysiakini Azlan Zamhari / Malaysiakini

If not for this issue, Husam is confident that PAS could win Kelantan "comfortably."

Based on his own calculations, he argued that there has been a swing at an average of 13 percent from BN to the opposition in the past five by-elections since 2004.

This is a "big threat" to the ruling coalition, he said.

Since the Election Commission has yet to give any indication that it will accede to the opposition's request for the use of indelible ink to prevent multiple voting, Husam said: "We need to prepare for the worst."

He added that if the EC could do two things - ensure that the final electoral rolls are given out much earlier than nomination day and the introduction of indelible ink - then PAS would stand a fair chance in Kelantan.

If not, PAS is "finished" and can forget about forming the next government in the state which it has held for 17 years.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/67377>