



Four Penang PKR YBs capture division chief's posts
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All four PKR assemblypersons vying for the chairperson's post in their respective divisions have won in the party polls in Penang today, bringing a sense of relief to the candidates.

Bayan Baru, dubbed the 'hot' seat as it is the only parliamentary constituency with all its three state seats under PKR, has been captured by Pantai Jerejak assemblyperson Sim Tze Tsin (*left*) with 499 votes (unofficial votes as at 10pm).

It is learnt that Sim, who is party supremo Anwar Ibrahim's political aide, beat M Nyanasegaran, former Bayan Baru MIC chief, who garnered 260 votes.

Team Reformasi, led by Sim, as opposed to Nyanasegaran's Team Rakyat, has also swept the division committee's posts.

A total of 781 out of 5,500 eligible voters turned up for the division polls today. There were 21 spoilt votes.

This put to rest Team Reformasi's concern that it was in a critical condition yesterday and had only a 50-50 chance to win the polls.

In Bukit Bendera, Kebun Bunga assemblyperson Jason Ong Khan Lee won with 76 votes in a landslide victory over former division deputy chief Afnan Idris who garnered only 13 votes.

When contacted, Ong said the voter turnout for his division was only about five percent as only 89 of 1,700 members cast their ballots.

In Balik Pulau, Penang state legislative speaker Abdul Halim Hussain won with 217 votes against division vice-chairperson Mohd Shukri Ishak, who bagged 87 votes.

Out of 2,100 division members, 310 turned up to vote today.

In Nibong Tebal, assemblyperson Sungai Bakap Maktar Shapee won with 210 votes over Mohd Rizal Abd Hamid, who garnered a close 143 votes.

Out of 2,500 members, 382 voters cast their votes.

Dry-run for upcoming general election

When contacted, Abdul Halim, who is PKR state secretary, said the divisional polls were exciting because they mirrored the country's general election.

He added that the lessons learnt from the polls would be documented to prepare candidates for the coming elections, rumoured to be held as early as next year.

"After this, we will have to do a bit of housekeeping so that we can be better prepared for the real elections," he said.

"What I can see in the PKR polls this time is that members want better quality people to

head the division and party," he added.

Earlier, party sources in Bayan Baru said that there was a minor verbal tussle between supporters of both contesting parties, due to the location of the voting posts.

A source told *Malaysiakini* that the situation in Bayan Baru was 'tense' and voters were worried that a fight might break out between the two teams. However, no untoward incident was reported.

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