

Ijok: PKR Malay candidate a smarter strategy
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I refer to the letter Ijok: Can't an Indian represent Malay rights?

I must say that opposition party PKR is right in fielding a Malay candidate at Ijok for the very simple reason that strategy dictates such a choice. To field an Indian against another Indian from the BN would be suicidal.

If you study past records (the recent one being Machap), you will find that when two non-Malays contest against each other, the Malays will inevitably support the BN guy. DAP adopted the wrong strategy in Machap when it selected a Chinese. The DAP candidate obtained about 1,400 votes without a doubt from the Chinese as the Malays are averse to voting for a Chinese DAP member.

Assuming the BN Chinese candidate obtained 50% of the 1,400 Chinese votes, this means that balance of 3,600 votes came from the Malay voters. If DAP had fielded a Malay candidate and split the Malay votes, the result could have been a cliffhanger. The DAP (or PKR) Malay candidate would have obtained $1,800 + 1,400 = 3,200$ votes, around the same as the BN candidate.

There is no doubt in my mind that if an Indian candidate from the opposition was nominated to contest in Ijok against an Indian from BN, the latter would win hands down. Now, with a Malay candidate, the opposition votes from the Chinese and Indians - plus a sizeable 'split votes' from the Malays - the battle for Ijok is more even.

For the opposition to win any contest against BN, the opposition cannot adopt the same strategy as the latter. BN has no option but to field an Indian candidate because it was a seat allocated to the MIC.

PKR or DAP have the luxury of not abiding by the same agreement that firmly binds the BN. Instead, they can face political reality and field a candidate that provides the best opportunity to win the seat based on the racial profile of a Malay-majority area.

It is a correct decision of PKR to field a Malay candidate. To do otherwise would severely diminish the chances of an opposition victory.

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