

Pollster predicts BN win, PKR to edge out SAPP
Malaysiakini.com
November 02, 2010

An early prediction by an independent research centre indicates that BN is on course to retaining the Batu Sapi parliamentary seat as expected, albeit by a reduced tally and majority.

The real battle however is for the runner-up position where the survey predicts PKR will edge out the Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP).

NONEThe Centre for Strategic Engagement (Cense), a political and public policy research organisation, predicts that BN would win the contest with 7,394 votes, or winning 45 percent of the popular vote based on a estimated turnout of 18,273.

In the March 2008 general elections, BN's candidate Edmund Chong Ket Wah, who died three weeks ago in a motorcycle accident, won the seat with 9,479 votes in a straight fight against independent candidate Chong Kwong Wing, who garnered 5,771 votes.

NONECense estimates that PKR will finish second in a tight race with SAPP, the former predicted to poll 4,597, or 28 percent, of the votes while the latter is predicted to get 4,282, or 26 percent, of the votes.

The report, which is based on "current sentiments", calculated a 15 percent swing against BN among Chinese voters, on top of a five percent swing among the majority Muslim bumiputera voters in favour of the opposition.

azlanThis swing will be in addition to the present number of opposition supporters, with the majority of extra Muslim bumiputera votes expected to go to PKR's Ansari Abdullah while the extra Chinese votes will probably be split between both opposition parties, with a larger portion going to SAPP.

Cense stressed however that their swing estimates are set at the minimum, with a real possibility of the swing being higher than expected.

The report explained that PKR is expected to edge out SAPP into second place based on the Pakatan Rakyat's continued efforts to penetrate the largely BN stronghold among the Muslim bumiputera community, which makes up nearly 60 percent of the 25,582 strong electorate.

SAPP meanwhile is expected to win the majority of the 9,737 Chinese voters, who are seen as having a decidedly opposition bent.

It could go from bad to worse for BN

The situation, however, could continue to swing further in favour of the opposition in general, with support for BN potentially waning among more Chinese voters as the campaign nears its last 24 hours.

NONEDespite the last place prediction, SAPP president and Batu Sapi candidate Yong Teck Lee continues to be seen as the one with more aces up his sleeve.

The Cense report sees Usno loyalists as a potential hotbed of support for the former chief minister, mostly due to Umno's refusal to allow a revival of the Sabah-based Muslim bumiputera-centric party.

Usno, which was the political platform of the first governor of Sabah, Mustapha Harun, had fallen into obscurity since Umno came to prominence after the 1994 BN takeover of the Sabah government.

The report indicates that Yong could possibly enjoy significant support from the Suluk community in the form of protest votes against Umno's continued presence in Sabah.

Sabah slogan will have traction

Cense however sees SAPP's 'Sabah for Sabahans' slogan as its greatest weapon, as it represents an all-encompassing slogan that hits all the right buttons for Sabahans.

The report said the slogan emphasises the simmering anger of Sabahans over perceived unfair treatment by the federal and state administrations, which are both incidentally led by BN, and also the issue of Sabah rights.

"The Sabah for Sabahans slogan will have traction with Sabahans. It is a powerful slogan in the psyche of Sabahans, regardless of race," the report added.

Looking at the overall voting trend, Cense believes the results would be quite different if it were a straight battle between BN and SAPP.

"The trend shows that opposition votes are clearly higher than BN's. If Yong were to go head-to-head with Linda (Tsen Thau Lin, BN's candidate), the seat would clearly go to Yong," the report said.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/147157>