

Pakatan ready for snap polls
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Pakatan Rakyat is on a high alert for a snap parliamentary election within the next one year after Najib Abdul Razak becomes the country's sixth prime minister this March.
MCPX

najib tun razak 040808The opposition alliance's leadership anticipates that Najib would be left with no choice but to seek a fresh mandate from Malaysians and clear out parliamentarians linked closely to outgoing premier, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

PKR information chief Tian Chua said the Pakatan Rakyat leadership had already alerted its leaders and members across the country to be prepared for the snap election.

"We have forecast a snap election because the new premier needs to have more of his men in the parliament and cabinet, unlike now," he said, stressing that Najib would surely not want to fill his cabinet with Abdullah's men.

tian chua 02"Moreover, he will want the snap election to reduce Pakatan Rakyat's parliamentary strength," he told Malaysiakini when attending a fund raising dinner organised by the Pantai Jerejak Welfare Organisation in Bayan Baru, Penang, last night.

DAP national election preparatory committee chairperson Tan Kok Wai also conveyed a similar message to all party leaders in a letter dated Dec 16, 2008.

He called on DAP leaders and members at all levels to be prepared to face an early parliamentary election because the new premier would seek a fresh mandate.

He called on party leaders and members to carry out a massive electoral registration drive, especially among young voters.

The Election Commission has revealed that some six million eligible voters, mostly youths, have yet to register and Tan revealed that DAP planned to get as many youths registered before the snap polls.

He urged the party's state and branch committees to launch voter registration exercises in collaboration with the EC mobile unit.

Analysts pointed out that young voters have mostly voted against Barisan Nasional in last March's general election, helping the opposition alliance to secure unprecedented electoral gains.

Pakatan Rakyat managed to win four state governments in Penang, Kedah, Perak and Selangor, and retained Kelantan while denying BN its two-third parliamentary majority.

'Anwar, the better choice'

Meanwhile, Tian Chua expressed confidence that Pakatan Rakyat had the capacity and capability to improve on its March electoral performance in the event of a snap federal election.

anwar ibrahimFirstly, he said compared with Najib, Pakatan Rakyat's premier designate Anwar Ibrahim was seen as more credible by all Malaysians.

He noted that Indians were still fuming over the continued detention without trial of the five leaders from the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf).

"The ban on Hindraf and Najib's major role in it has stirred up Indian sentiments," he said, adding that S Samy Vellu's continued presence at the helm of MIC has further alienated the community from BN.

As for the Chinese, he said the majority have more confidence in Anwar than Najib.

Moreover, he said, BN's Chinese-based parties MCA and Gerakan were still in shambles and have not recovered from the March 8 elections.

The Malays, he added, also see no reason to rejoice with Najib taking over the reins.

"If the new prime minister thinks BN can better its results than the last polls, he has got it wrong," he said.

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