

BN Confident Of Victory In Kerdau But PAS Not Giving In
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TEMERLOH - Today, 8,999 registered voters in the Kerdau state constituency will decide who will be their elected representative in the State Legislative Assembly.

After campaigning for eight days since last Saturday, a check by Bernama revealed that both political parties contesting in the by election - Barisan Nasional (BN) and PAS - had expressed confidence in winning.

During the campaign, the target was focused on voters in three Felda land schemes namely Felda Jengka 25, Jengka 23 and Jengka 22 with leaders from both parties visiting the constituents tirelessly.

Bernama sources said the latest information showed that out of the total number of voters, 63.97 per cent would vote for the BN, 14.6 per cent were fence-sitters, 16.28 per cent would vote for PAS while the stand of 0.8 per cent was unclear.

The Kuala Krau Umno division head and Member of Parliament Ismail Mohamed Said said he was positive the BN candidate would win and the party machinery must work hard to ensure that BN voters would come out to cast their ballots.

Based on simple calculation, if 80 per cent of the voters were to come out and vote, BN could raise the majority up to 2,000 votes compared with 1,615 votes in the 2008 general election with the same percentage of voter turnout.

Umno information chief Ahmad Maslan said the majority obtained was also expected to increase with an estimated 57 per cent from the three Felda land schemes giving their votes to BN.

"They still form our bastion. Issues such as the CESS payment of RM13,000 had been resolved. We will pay out on Monday here and for Felda schemes in other places, we will determine the time," he said.

Meanwhile, PAS sources projected that if they were to get 40 per cent of the votes from the three Felda land schemes, raise the support from traditional villages to 60 per cent, and get 70 per cent of the Chinese votes, this would be sufficient for them to win.

"As for the Orang Asli votes and the others, it is difficult for us to get. But even if we don't win, reducing the majority for the BN is good enough. Winning is a bonus," the sources said.

The PAS election director for the Kerdau state constituency, Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man said support from the Felda community was important to them because in 2008, they lost by 1,000 votes including in the Felcra land scheme in Rumpun Makmur.

He said support in the traditional villages was rather static and favoured the ruling party but the Chinese voters gave very good response to PAS.

In terms of the age breakdown, 21.72 per cent of the voters are between 40 and 49 years

old, followed by 19.72 per cent aged between 60 and 69, and 16.71 per cent aged between 21 and 29.

In terms of racial composition, 88.7 per cent of the voters are Malays, five per cent Chinese, 3.3 per cent Indians, 2.6 per cent Orang Asli, 2.4 per cent others and 0.01 per cent are Sarawak bumiputera.

The Kerdau state constituency has 13 polling centres and 22 voting streams.

The vote tallying centre will be at the Dewan Tun Razak, Temerloh Municipal Council.

In the by-election, the BN candidate, Syed Ibrahim Syed Ahmad, 44, will face Hasanudin Salim, 44, from PAS in a straight fight. The seat fell vacant following the death of incumbent Assemblyman Zaharuddin Abu Kasim, 63, on Feb 12

(Bernama)

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