

PAS targets 60 MPs for GE13
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 1 — PAS aims to win 60 federal seats in a general election that is expected within a year.

President Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said this today in Kuala Terengganu at a gathering of about 500 who have returned home to Terengganu for the Hari Raya holidays.

“Our strategy for 2008 was to take over states and we succeeded in governing three. This time, we want to add Parliament seats,” the Marang MP said.

Hadi said PAS aims to increase its representation in Parliament. — File pic
Despite being the largest party in the opposition electoral pact ahead of the March 2008 general election, it ended up as the junior partner in Pakatan Rakyat (PR) with 23 MPs as opposed to the DAP (28) and PKR (31).

But with PKR losing seven MPs due to defections and a failure to recapture Hulu Selangor in a by-election, while PAS added Kuala Terengganu to its ranks, it has become more influential in the opposition coalition as it carries the main burden of winning over the Malays, who form the majority of the electorate.

However, its candidates will come face-to-face against Umno, the senior partner in the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition that has won at least 60 per cent of Malay votes in a string of by-election victories since Datuk Seri Najib Razak took over as prime minister in April 2009.

The Malaysian Insider also understands that in recent PR seat negotiations, PAS has asked to contest in more mixed seats rather than just Malay-majority areas but it has met firm resistance from PKR.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s party counts mixed urban seats as its main stronghold and is also facing a stiff contest against BN as it seeks to retain leadership of the Selangor state government.

Abdul Hadi added that PAS aimed to take 25 federal seats from Umno, meaning that another 11 seats have to come from non-Malay majority seats contested by other BN component parties.

He said that PAS would need a core support of Malays and he was “confident they will change. It will take some time to convince them.”

Najib is expected to call a general elections soon despite his mandate only expiring on April 28 2013 as the economy flounders under the threat of a likely double-dip recession.

The Umno president will also want to dissolve Parliament before potentially fractious party polls which must be held by October 2012.

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