

PKR insists can trounce BN in Johor
The Malaysian Insider
November 26, 2011
By Shannon Teoh

JOHOR BARU, Nov 26 — PKR reaffirmed its confidence today in toppling Barisan Nasional (BN) in its Johor bastion, claiming the current sentiment on the ground is similar to Perak and Selangor prior to Election 2008.

Saifuddin is confident PKR can take Johor in the next polls. Its secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution said in his welcoming address at the party's national congress here that "the signal is clear, whether explicit or implicit, Johor is the state that we will take."

"The signal we get is the same as in Perak and Selangor before. We have planned 20 ceramahs each night and the reception... we never got this five years ago," the Machang MP told a press conference later.

He told delegates at what is likely to be the party's last national meet before polls expected early next year that PKR has also previously held its national meet in Kedah, Penang, Selangor and Perak before Election 2008.

Pakatan Rakyat (PR) grabbed all four states as well as Kelantan in the March 2008 polls and also denied BN its customary two-thirds majority in Parliament.

The Malaysian Insider reported that Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman summoned district officers on Thursday morning to brief them on "limiting the impact" of PKR's ceramahs.

"MB is taking PKR's presence this weekend seriously," a source said, noting that this was on top of Abdul Ghani's already hectic pre-election schedule that sees him pounding the pavement at least four days a week in "hot seats" across the state.

Despite this, the party has refused to be drawn into talk of a menteri besar candidate.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim also told reporters today that PR "won't talk about MB candidate" but would work together to capture the state first.

Johor was mostly unaffected from the March 2008 "tsunami" that swept 82 PR lawmakers into Parliament.

PR won just one federal and six state seats out of 26 and 56 respectively on offer in Johor in 2008 and none of the winners were from PKR.

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