

BN will wrest back Selangor with 32 seats, says Noh Omar
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By Nomy Nozwir

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 1 —Selangor Umno deputy chief Datuk Seri Noh Omar is confident that Barisan Nasional (BN) will be able to take back Malaysia's richest state at the next national polls by nabbing 32 of the 56 seats in the state legislative assembly.

The state, which had been held by BN since Malaysia's founding, had slipped out of its grasp in the last general election four years ago to the PKR-DAP-PAS alliance, leaving the powerful federal coalition with only 20 state seats.

"I don't want to get ahead of fate, but God willing I am confident BN will be able to win back Selangor, at least 32 seats," Umno veteran Noh (picture) told The Malaysian Insider in a recent interview, disclosing for the first time the number of seats it believes it can gain.

The 13-member BN coalition only needs nine more seats to gain a simple majority with 29 seats.

But the Tanjung Karang MP remained tight-lipped on BN's strategy in wresting back the highly-developed west coast state.

The agriculture minister only said that Selangor residents were now starting to see that the PKR-DAP-PAS partnership that had since formed a fledgling bloc now known as Pakatan Rakyat (PR) pact in the wake of their landslide wins in Election 2008 was unfit to govern.

In the 12th general election, the three federal opposition parties had swept a total of 36 seats, with PKR taking the lion's share of 15 seats; and the DAP and PAS taking 13 and eight respectively.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who is also Umno president, has repeatedly vowed to win back Selangor for his BN coalition by all means necessary.

Selangor is said to be a state with hot seats because of its large number of newly-registered voters, as well as being the country's wealthiest state.

Noh dismissed talk of him being appointed as Selangor menteri besar despite rumours that he would be given the state's highest position if BN wins.

"I don't want to get ahead of fate, I am still a member of Parliament for Tanjung Karang, but it all depends on the leadership.

"Most importantly, we move the party machinery to win this state, the question of who (will be) menteri besar is not important," he said.

Noh has been widely speculated to be gunning for the Selangor menteri besar's job

He also kept his lips sealed on the potential candidates for the top state government post, saying BN's focus now was on winning back the state.

"In 2008, they (Pakatan) also didn't know who their candidate for menteri besar was, so it's better for BN to focus on winning back Selangor," he said.

Selangor's former Menteri Besar Dr Mohammad Khir Toyo has rejected the possibility of contesting in the coming elections after the courts found him guilty recently in a breach of trust case.

The trained dentist is currently appealing against his conviction.

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