

Small Party PBRS Determined To Retain Seats, Ensure Big Win For BN
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By Siti Zubaidah Abdullah

KOTA KINABALU, Dec 26 (Bernama) -- Although Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) is a small component of Barisan Nasional (BN), it is going all out to retain its seats and play an important role in ensuring a win big for BN in coming 13th general election.

While admitting that the general election this time will be the toughest ever, PBRS president Tan Sri Joseph Kurup is confident the party will play a role just as crucial as that of the big BN component parties for the ruling coalition to remain in power at the state (Sabah) and federal levels.

Kurup, who is also Natural Resources and Environment Deputy Minister, said PBRS was all prepared to do battle in the coming elections to ensure that the Pensiangan parliamentary seat and Sook state seat currently held by the party would be retained, as well as overall victory for BN.

In the 2008 general election, Kurup, 67, won the Pensiangan seat uncontested while party deputy president and state Assistant Minister for Tourism, Culture and Environment Datuk Ellron Angin defeated the opposition candidate to win the Sook seat.

With only a few months to the coming 13th general election, Kurup said the focus was now on strengthening the party's election machinery to ensure it would be in tip-top condition to counter the opposition's propaganda during campaigning.

In this regard, Kurup said PBRS would be using the two-day party congress from this Friday as a platform to fire up the spirit of its members, besides fine-tuning its election machinery.

"The PBRS congress is also the place for boosting the spirit of cooperating with candidates selected by BN.

"We are working very hard to convey, explain and implement government policies. Hence, the congress will also focus on reminding the delegates to make thorough preparations in facing the coming general election. We will be declaring our support and votes for the BN candidates," he told Bernama, here, today.

The congress will be officially opened by Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin on Saturday.

While declaring loyalty to BN and that PBRS would not even think of quitting the coalition unlike the Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Kurup said PBRS had sacrificed a lot for BN, including setting aside the question of positions and personal interest.

"We have continued to assist BN to form the government (since the party's establishment in 1994), although the party was said to have been overlooked, where our privileges were only getting the posts of political secretary and senator, and the seats given to other (BN component) parties.

"But no matter what, we have stuck with BN as we know how important it is to struggle in BN as a component party and we do not wish to weaken BN. This proves our loyalty to BN," he said, adding that he was even willing to be dropped as deputy minister in 2004.

Kurup said BN was the best choice for the people including in Sabah, as unprecedented development and success had and would continue to reach every nook and corner of the country including Pensiangan.

"Various development programmes have been implemented to improve the people's lot, including building the Keningau Integrated Livestock Centre in Sook with an allocation of almost RM1 billion, the clean water supply project in Pegalungan at a cost of RM56 million, repair of longhouses, the Local Housing Assistance Programme, Keningau Hospital and Nabawan Hospital."

Kurup hoped the people would not make any error of judgement in deciding on the country's destiny.

He said BN had an excellent track record that must be maintained as the ruling coalition, compared to the opposition group where the parties were moving in different directions.

On the allocation of seats for BN component parties, Kurup said: "The BN-held seats should remain with the incumbent parties but I think exceptions can be made and the vacant seats appropriately allotted. There should nevertheless be understanding and a give-and-take attitude as we (BN) want to win.

Meanwhile, Kurup congratulated Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman for having successfully administered the state and for the state's sound financial management, proving that the BN government was capable of managing the state's resources well.

He also said that Najib, who is also BN chairman, had proven that he was prime minister for all Malaysians by helming a government which did not sideline any group under the 1Malaysia concept.

"With the 2013 Budget, I've not seen such a people-friendly budget covering all levels of society, from schoolchildren, youths, single mothers, senior citizens, Rela members to civil servants.

"The 1Malaysia concept is working well and it is not a mere slogan, but followed up with actions in line with the Federal Constitution" he added.

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