

**In seats split, PKR says besting BN is main criterion**  
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**By Zurairi AR**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 10 — The candidates with the best chance to defeat Barisan Nasional (BN) will be given priority to contest seats disputed by Pakatan Rakyat's (PR) three component parties, PKR said today.

According to PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (picture), this was one of the three principles that the pact was using in negotiating seats to be contested by each party.

"The seat negotiation process has all this while been run in a brotherly spirit between the three parties with the same goal: To carry the hope of the people to replace BN as the new federal government," Saifuddin said here in a statement.

Seats won by a party in Election 2008 will be defended by the same party, and a party also has the option to re-contest the seats it lost. However, those seats can still be negotiated by other parties.

According to Saifuddin, it was these principles that led to PKR deferring to DAP's Lim Kit Siang the Gelang Patah constituency, which was previously contested by the former's Zaliha Mustafa. Zaliha lost to BN's Tan Ah Eng by 8,851 votes in 2008.

The same applied in DAP's Wong Tack contesting Bentong and PAS's Nasruddin Hassan contesting Temerloh, both previously contested by PKR.

PKR, in turn, was given the green light to field Chua Jui Meng in Segamat, after he was previously engaged in a public spat with Johor DAP chief Dr Boo Cheng Hau over the Gelang Patah parliamentary seat.

Yesterday, PAS announced the candidacy of its national leaders for the general election, with vice-president Datuk Husam Musa confirmed as the candidate for Putrajaya, in another sign that PR is taking the fight to Umno strongholds.

Besides Husam, another PAS vice president, Datuk Salahuddin Ayub, will also be heading to Johor where he will stand in the Umno bastion of Pulau.

Party president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang will be defending his Marang seat, while deputy president Mohamad Sabu will contest in Pendang.

Some 13.3 million voters, including 5,200 abroad, are eligible to cast their ballots in Election 2013 to elect lawmakers in 222 federal and 505 state seats in 12 states. Sarawak already held its state elections in 2011.

The Election Commission (EC) announced today that the 13th general election will be held on May 5. Nominations will be on April 20, which will signal the start of formal electoral campaigns that will last 15 days.

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