

## **Adenan will lead BN to success at Sarawak polls, predicts analyst**

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**By DENNIS WONG**

**KUCHING**, Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem is on a roll as the state edges closer towards the polls.

With the turn of events plaguing the Opposition parties and its crumbling coalition, Sarawak BN may have an easier win at the polls, which may be called between now and June next year when the term expires.

Despite things looking good for the state BN now, political analyst Dr Faisal Hazis is sceptical as it, too, has their own issues that need to be ironed out.

“The top Sarawak BN leadership seems to be acknowledging the presence of the Sarawak BN Plus group.

“But will this be acceptable to the component parties who are already in the BN coalition?” asked Faisal when met by The Rakyat Post.

The state BN consists of a four-party coalition, namely Parti Pesaka Bumiputra Bersatu (PBB), Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS), Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP) and Sarawak United People’s Party (SUPP).

They collectively hold 55 out of the current 71 seats. PBB is the largest party in the state, holding 37 seats, while the rest of the coalition has six seats each.

However, two of the coalition parties, SPDP and SUPP, are facing a crisis at the moment.

“We have yet to see what Adenan has up his sleeve to manage this crisis.

“I believe neither side will back down, but if the issue is not sorted out and if this happens, there may even be backstabbing within the BN coalition itself during the polls later,” said Faisal.

The leadership crisis within SPDP and SUPP has bred two splinter parties — Parti Tenaga Rakyat Sarawak (Teras) and United People’s Party (UPP) — which are now known as the BN Plus as they have yet to be officially accepted into the BN fold.

Recently, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, during his state visit, acknowledged the two splinter parties by attending their events in Sibu and Kuching.

Teras is led by five incumbents who won their seats though the SPDP ticket, namely Tan Sri William Mawan Ikom (Pakan), Datuk Peter Nansian Ngusie (Tasik Biru), Rosey Yunus (Bekenu), Datuk Sylvester Entrie (Marudi) and Paulus Gumbang (Batu Danau).

In the UPP camp, the party is led by Datuk Seri Wong Soon Koh (Bawang Assan), Datuk Dr Jerip Susil (Bengoh) and Dr Johnical Rayong Ngipa (Engkilili).

Faisal said with the current seat allocation, there will be overlapping claims, especially between the splinter groups as the decision on the 11 new seats is still pending a court decision.

“It will be interesting to see what transpires before the polls,” Faisal said.

SPDP currently has a line-up of six proposed candidates, which party insiders said had Adenan’s backing and they, too, were eager to defend what was once theirs.

“We want to prove a point that those who left the party no longer have the support from the ground,” said the party insider.

It is learnt that the six proposed candidates are mostly from the working professionals, except for one senior government officer.

As for the Opposition parties in the state, Faisal said PKR would have a hard time securing its rural seats as the party itself seemed to have lost its direction, unlike DAP that has pushed inland to capture rural hearts.

“PKR has been harping on popular issues in hopes of getting support, but DAP is reaching out to the rural people with its ‘Impian Sarawak’ programme, which is slowly gaining ground.

“As for PAS, its presence has never been a threat for PBB, but they, too, can push the votes to be in their favour, like what happened in Beting Maro in 2011,” said Faisal.

PAS candidate Abang Ahmad Kardee Abang Masagus did not win the seat but managed to give PBB candidate Razali Gapor a good challenge in the 2011 polls.

Razali secured 3,069 votes, while Abang Ahmad secured 2,678 votes at the polls, a marginal win of 391 votes.

“Adenan is also taking advantage of the current situation at the federal level.

“His pledge in supporting Najib gives the state government the financial backing in bringing much needed development projects here in return.

“So it is a win-win situation for both leaders. As Najib strengthens his grassroots support in the state, the state gets to fast forward its development programme it sorely needs,” said Faisal.

Adenan, the seasoned politician, may seem to have more up his sleeve, but like how he likes his books, his plan is being revealed only one page at a time.

A recent meme has become viral over the days, quoting a line of Adenan's speech, which says:

"Najib merik berbilun biliun bukan berjuta-juta kepada Sarawak masa di Kapit pagi tadi. Entah sik ku tauk siney nya dapat duit ya. Janjinya dah madah kedak ya. Kita aok jak pok."

(“Najib have given billions, not millions to Sarawak, while he was in Kapit this morning. I don't know where he got that money from. But as long as he pledges it for us, I guess it is fine, bro.)

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