

## **Chances of Umno wresting Kelantan bleak, says Ibrahim Ali**

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**By Khairil Ashraf**

**The former Pasir Mas MP says voters there have been conditioned to reject BN ever since PAS took control of the state in 1990.**

KUALA LUMPUR: Umno will find it very hard to wrest Kelantan from PAS in the 14th general election (GE14).

This is despite Kelantan people being generally dissatisfied with the current PAS government, Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali said today.

The former Pasir Mas MP said voters had become conditioned to rejecting the dominant Malay party in Barisan Nasional (BN) ever since the state fell into PAS' hands in 1990.

The Kelantanese will continue to favour PAS at the ballot box despite being aware that the state's economy has been backward and its treatment of the Orang Asli has been harsh under the Islamist party, he said.

"Although people are nervous about the current situation there, it is difficult for Umno to take over the state because the masses have developed a mindset to reject the party," he said at a press conference at the Perkasa headquarters here today.

He said the mindset is so strong that it would compel voters to back PAS for another term.

"All sorts of allegations have been made against Umno in Kelantan. There is a dislike towards the party's leaderships at the divisional level which is making people support PAS during elections."

Umno information chief Annuar Musa recently reminded Umno not to rest on its laurels after party veteran and Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said BN had a good chance to end PAS' 27-year reign over the state in GE14, which is due by the middle of next year.

The last time Umno ruled Kelantan was when it won the state in the 7th general election in 1986. It also saw PAS earning only one parliamentary seat, marking its worst electoral performance ever.

The rise of Fadzil Noor as PAS president in 1989 brought about a softening of the party's rhetoric, making it more moderate in the run-up to the subsequent general election in 1990 when it seized Kelantan again with the cooperation of Umno splinter Semangat 46.

PAS has held the state ever since.

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