

Only 6 Felda seats see bigger shift in support for BN, says Invoke

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By Aedi Asri

Rafizi Ramli says this finding is based on data collected before the recent upheaval in Felda subsidiary FGV.

KUALA LUMPUR: Research outfit Invoke Malaysia claims that only six of the 52 parliamentary constituencies with sizeable voting populations of Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) settlers have seen a bigger shift in support for Barisan Nasional (BN).

The six are Teluk Intan, which recorded increased support by 10.3% since the last general election in May 2013, Kulai (8.28%), Bentong (4.6%), Raub (3.02%), Segamat (2.96%) and Tanjung Malim (1.83%).

PKR vice-president Rafizi Ramli, who leads Invoke, said five of them were contested by non-Malay candidates while Raub was won by DAP's Mohd Ariff Sabri Abd Aziz.

Another seat which saw a slight rise in support for BN was Bagan Datuk (0.26%) whose MP is Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

The findings give optimism to the opposition that seats where Felda settlers wield significant influence may help it in overthrowing the ruling BN in the 14th general election (GE14), due by the middle of next year.

Rafizi said these levels of support were observed in data collected before troubles began in Felda subsidiary Felda Global Ventures Berhad (FGV), culminating in its CEO Zakaria Arshad stepping aside for graft investigations to take place and chairman Isa Samad being replaced.

He said the conclusions were made based on data gathered up till April this year.

"We have still not analysed new data up till the latest scenario," he said today.

The Pandan MP also said 46 other seats with sizeable Felda communities showed swings in opposition support, with Padang Terap recording the highest at 24.1%.

However, it could not be determined whether these supporters were siding with Pakatan Harapan or PAS, or if they would assure victory for the opposition.

“For example, in Kulai, the majority (for the opposition) may be lower,” he said, referring to the seat won by DAP’s Teo Nie Ching with a majority of 13,000 votes in 2013.

Rafizi expressed confidence that if voter sentiments in marginal constituencies like Teluk Intan, Tanjung Malim, Segamat and Raub remained unchanged, the opposition had a chance to win GE14 and form the government.

He said the Felda crisis since 2016 was among the factors leading to increased opposition support.

It was exacerbated by the troubles in FGV which affected Felda settlers.

“Payments were late, houses not ready, bonuses not paid,” he said.

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