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Charok Kudong

DR MAHATHIR, A NAME REMEMBERED ALWAYS IN CHAROK KUDONG

PENDANG, July 9 (Bernama) -- Kampung Charok Kudong located about 15km from here may be quite unique in name but it has never been sidelined from the mainstream development.

The village which is about a century old has all the main facilities including a school, mosque, public hall, clinic besides electricity and water supply.

A stream ends inside the village and so the villagers named their village after the stream but today its name is also synonymous with that of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

This is because the Prime Minister was once the Charok Kudong Umno branch member when the village was under the Kota Setar Parliament constituency.

The former chief of Charok Kudong Umno branch, Haji Hassan Ahmad, 70, said Dr Mahathir is dearly loved by the villagers because he was a good-mannered medical officer.

However, some of the villagers are influenced by the Islamic image brought about by PAS. This divides the villagers with some hating Umno, which had established itself much earlier in the village.

Hassan, who is an Umno activist, said he was happy to see development taking shape in the village even though it was denied by political opponents.

"I am one of the original villagers here. I saw development taking shape since the time of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al Haj (first Prime Minister of Malaysia)," he said when met by Bernama in Charok Kudong.

Among the initial development in the village, with a population of 1,000, was the construction of the Sekolah Kebangsaan Charok Kudong, whose foundation stone was laid by the late Tunku about 40 years ago, he said.

This is because the villagers were of the view that no government leaders would come to their village to bring development.

But the government had always kept its promises, said Hassan who served in the homeguard during the Emergency period and had seen what differences in politics did to the village.

"Now, the villagers are coming back together again but if the opposition leaders come here again, it will start all over again," he said.

The village's Wanita Umno chief Hatiah Ahmad said majority of the women folks supported the Barisan Nasional (BN) but a few were carried away with the narrow-mindedness promoted by the opposition.

Nevertheless, she strongly believed that there was strong support for the BN in the village.

Hatiah said the village had seen tremendous development and the people should be thankful.

Meanwhile, several villagers said Datuk Othman Abdul is a suitable candidate for the Pendang seat.

Ahmad Hamzah, 54, said Othman is generous and humble, and thus loved by the villagers.

Zaleha Lah, 61, was confident that Othman would win since he was friendly to all, irrespective of their political ideology.

-- BERNAMA

AD ABG