

This is Parthiban's destiny
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K Kabilan and RK Anand

K Parthiban's family was not surprised that he got the nod to be the BN candidate for the Ijok state seat. In fact they knew he was destined to be a top politician.

"He was into politics from his younger days," Parthiban's kid brother Dinesh (right) told Malaysiakini when met in Batang Berjuntai recently.

"Everyone knows him in this area. Not necessarily as the Tanjung Karang MIC division secretary but for the other social works he has been involved in," said the 25-year-old sibling.

"Of course he is more popular now. Everyday (MIC president) Samy Vellu is standing next to him, introducing him to the people of Ijok.

"And then the Selangor Menteri Besar (Dr Khir Toyo) is also doing the same in the Malay areas," he added.

Malaysiakini met up with him late Thursday night while on a visit to see how the by-election campaign was proceeding.

While waiting for teh tarik in a popular Indian restaurant in Batang Berjuntai, Dinesh started talking about his brother and how he had been a father figure to all his five siblings.

"We are orphans, you know.. Parthiban is the second eldest child, next to an elder sister, but he took it upon himself to look after all of us," he said.

"He educated all of us. Two of my sisters are now studying medicine while another sister is a teacher."

This is a very close-knit family. Neither Parthiban, 38, nor his eldest sister is married. Dinesh said this was due to their commitments towards the family.

"Actually we are now in the midst of finding a wife for Parthiban," said Dinesh with a glee.

"He has become very busy now as a result of this by-election. We will be missing him once he wins and becomes busier," he added.

A team player

And that was the cue for us to ask him about his brother's political career thus far.

"As I said he was always interested in politics. And we knew he was going to make it big. After Sivalingam passed away, we were confident Parthiban would be in the running for the seat," he said.

The Ijok state seat fell vacant following the sudden death of K Sivalingam on April 4.

Dinesh's confidence in his brother's political career was a result of his brother's close association with state MIC and Umno leaders.

"If you ask me, his political guru is the present Tanjung Karang MIC division chief Senator NR Maniam Krishnan, who had taken Parthiban under his care and guidance," said Dinesh who also works for Maniam in his office in Shah Alam.

Dinesh was confident that Parthiban would win the by-election by comfortably beating PKR's Khalid Ibrahim.

"He is a good person. Very simple and approachable. His students loved him during his teaching days. Of course he gets angry easily but then he also cools down as easily," added Dinesh, getting ready to join his brother who was campaigning in a nearby school.

One last snippet he told about his brother was how good Parthiban was in playing football.

"He has stopped playing football now but during his younger days he was a good footballer. He knows how to be a team player," added Dinesh.

Always a leader

Hoping to catch Parthiban in his campaign trail, malaysiakini then quickly ascended to the nearby school only to be told that the BN candidate and the MIC president have left the venue.

Fortunately we came across some old friends of Parthiban, including a person who went to the same Seri Kota Teachers' Training College as Parthiban.

"I know him for about 16 years now. He was my junior but even then he had followers. He always had political ambitions," said S Murugan (right), 39, who now teaches science at SMK Rantau Panjang, Ijok.

"I am sure he will win here. He is a local boy from a poor family who has made it in life. He is very friendly and always willing to help. I am sure he will win this by-election," added Murugan proudly.

And this was the same message malaysiakini heard from all of Parthiban's friends that day.

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