

DPM claims opposition push has lost its steam
Malaysiakini.com
April 14, 2011

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin reckons that the opposition campaign in Sarawak has lost momentum with the crowds at its rallies waning by the day.

As such, he said, it would be erroneous to conclude that the turnout at urban areas at Pakatan Rakyat rallies indicate that the opposition will do better than they did in 2006, when BN won all but eight seats.

In fact, he said, when met in Kuching, people throng opposition rallies mainly because they are "curious" rather than anything else.

"Some people are curious to see the face of (PKR de facto leader) Anwar Ibrahim, to see these people speaking for the first time. Of course they want to hear all the juicy stories, all the allegations.

"People being people, they are more prone to listen to that sorts of stories rather than listen to me to for example. It's not attractive and not juicy because I speak about the real stuff of development.

It's like that in the beginning, but after they've heard it once people get bored...in the past few days until now they have not gathered the big crowds as they have in the first days," Muhyiddin (left) said.

Yesterday, the DAP rally in SUPP president George Chan's homeground Miri reached record levels drawing around 10,000 people, while in Kuching 5,000 came out to see speakers like DAP secretary-general and Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng compare Sarawak and Penang. The figure for Sibu reached 3,000.

Muhyiddin added that prime minister's willingness "to put on a hat and sing together" is something that would help the BN, which he claims is spreading a "blue wave" across the state.

Bleaching grey areas into white

With the campaign heading into the last 24 hours, Muhyiddin, who has been actively campaigning here alongside Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak in the past few days, said that the focus will be to turn "grey areas" into "white areas".

He, however, refused to name the seats which he considers "white", denying also that the grey seats sit within urban boundaries.

"Some urban seats are grey, some are white, some are black...but I can say that the majority (of seats) are white, and I am not playing psychological war...Why should I tell you (the exact figures)? You're from the media, you should already know these things," he laughed.

China Press reported today that Muhyiddin had claimed that the seats the SUPP is contending for which have seen the toughest opposition challenge in the campaign, are

"turning white".

Meanwhile, on a recent protest held by the SUPP against the DAP in Kuching for calling them an orang utan party (a play on words for the Chinese name for the SUPP), Muhyiddin said that this is a clear example of how the opposition is bringing in rude, rough and demeaning politics from the peninsula.

"There are ethics in campaigning. We shouldn't be insulting. It appears that (the opposition) feel that SUPP has risen so they have had to call them orang utan and all that. That is insolent," he said.

Asked, however, on the likes of Umi Hafilda Ali, the witness in Anwar's first sodomy trial, who along with several other former PKR members have in the past week been zigzagging Sarawak campaigning and delivering speeches in crude language, Muhyiddin said that she was only telling the truth.

"She could be telling the truth, but for those who have not heard it is rather unusual. For those in the peninsula it is quite usual, although some still don't know about it. She is talking about her experience with Anwar and (Umi Hafilda's brother and PKR deputy president) Azmin (Ali), so voters can make the right judgment about PKR leaders," he said.

However, he said, Umi Hafilda is not an official BN campaigner and had come on her own accord.

BN never buys votes

He also said that it is not a stretch to expect the opposition to fly in members of the youth wings from PAS and PKR to create trouble on polling day, especially for constituencies where the opposition is not confident of winning.

Muhyiddin also denied all allegations of vote-buying by Sarawak PKR chief Baru Bian who claims that votes are being bought for several thousand ringgit per voter in Ba'Kelalan, saying that the BN has always stuck to the rules.

Biasalah you (That's typical of you to ask that), I think people here won't buy these kinds of allegations. The BN has never done so, and I don't know if the opposition is doing so out of desperation, although I'm not accusing anyone. We never break the rules," he said.

Earlier, Muhyiddin had announced a RM200,000 allocation to refurbish the basketball court in SRJK (C) Sungai Apong, which is in Chinese-majority Pending contested by BN's Dr Sim Kui Hian and DAP's Violet Yong.

Speaking to 1,000 students and their parents this afternoon, he urged them to support Sim, who some have described as 'awkward-looking', because the cardiologist has a "good heart".

"I have seen billboards of a pretty lady, I believe her name is Violet. Sim's face is not as pretty but it doesn't matter. Don't look at the face, look at the heart," he said.

Muhyiddin was also seen sheepishly keeping time with his hands to the beat of the 1Malaysia song, sung at the top of their lungs by the children.

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