

Contest in a '1Malaysia' seat, Nurul Izzah tells Najib
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By Kuek Ser Kuang Keng

PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar called on Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today to walk his talk on 1Malaysia by contesting in a mixed constituency, such as her Lembah Pantai parliamentary seat.

"When talking about transformation and the multi-racial image of Malaysia, I hope Saifuddin will convey to the prime minister that he should consider the possibility of contesting in a mixed seat, a 1Malaysia seat.

NONE "From what I know, Pekan has 93 percent Malay voters.

"Therefore, in line with his words, 1Malaysia and all that, Najib should contest in mixed constituency like Lembah Pantai," Nurul Izzah told Umno supreme council member and Deputy Higher Education Minister Saifuddin Abdullah at a political forum in Shah Alam.

Her suggestion earned a round of applause from the 500-strong audience.

However, Nurul Izzah later told Malaysiakini that it was not a challenge to Najib but what she was pointing out was that the prime minister should walk his talk.

Nurul Izzah and Saifuddin were invited as speakers at the forum titled '13th General Election: Whose Votes Will Decide?'

The other speakers were DAP secretary-general and Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, Parti Kita chief Zaid Ibrahim and Universiti Malaya media studies lecturer Prof Abu Hassan Hasbullah.

The forum was organised by Malay daily Sinar Harian.

Nurul Izzah was first elected as MP in the last general election, in Lembah Pantai, a mixed urban constituency of Kuala Lumpur that has 52 percent Malay voters, 27 percent Chinese and 18 percent Indian.

Since elected to Parliament at the very young age of 23, Najib has been the MP for Pekan, a rural parliamentary constituency in Pahang, which has 93 percent Malay voters, 2.7 percent Chinese and one percent Indian.

Nurul Izzah also poked hole at Najib's transformation programmes, calling them "selective transformation" and "selective legislation".

She claimed that the Dewan Speaker had rejected a motion brought by her and other opposition MPs in March 2011 to lift the emergency proclamations, but Najib tabled the same motion eight months later and it has been passed by the Parliament.

She complained that the drafting and amendments of laws are done unilaterally by the government instead of a parliamentary select committee.

Zaid, who reiterated that voters should strengthen the opposition in the next polls, urged Najib to declare the assets of all cabinet members, which was a suggestion put forward by Zaid to Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's administration three years ago.

'Rosmah will play a significant role in next polls'

During the forum, a question from the floor on whether Najib's wife Rosmah Mansor will be the deciding factor in the next general election set off an explosion of laughter among the audience.

The question was not answered by the speakers until Zaid asked: "Why are you guys so afraid to answer the question about Rosmah?"

He then commented that Rosmah will play a significant role in the next polls due to the various allegations targeted at her.

Those who are not in the administration such as Rosmah and former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohammad, said Zaid, should refrain from influencing the government in policy-making.

Abu Hassan took a more aggressive stance, calling on voters to "revolt and topple the government" if the family members of the prime minister or ministers were found abusing public fund to enrich themselves.

On the controversy over Islamic hudud law, Abu Hassan put the blame on traditional media which he described as "primitive".

To him, the issue of hudud law would not create a political crisis if not for the "obsessive" traditional media which creates hatred among different races and religions.

Responding to this, Saifuddin pointed out that the readers had rejected the so-called mainstream media, causing their circulation to drop.

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