

## **Kedah rallies focus on Anwar, polls pledges**

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Pakatan Rakyat leaders swung into top gear last night, appearing in 15 different parliamentary constituencies, to woo Kedahans with juicy pre-election promises ahead of the impending 13th general polls.

But tales of how Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim, who was allegedly so wronged by the "system", was freed from his sodomy II charge on Monday still loomed large over last night's ceramah.

pakatan pokok sena ceramah 140112 3Pakatan's strategy this time is a two-pronged approach to entice both the Malay and minority communities into giving them the power to seize Putrajaya from the BN by explaining to them the need for the component parties to band together as a united coalition.

Some leaders spoke in at least two areas but sorely missed was Anwar.

He will be touching down at the Penang International Airport only at 12.30pm today, his first appearance up north since Jan 9.

At 3pm, he joins other Pakatan Rakyat leaders at the Sultan Abdul Halim Stadium to address some 600 delegates and 200 observers from the three parties.

Dangling election goodies

Last night, in Kampung Baru Pokok Sena, star Pakatan speakers, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng and PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu managed to draw a 1,000-strong crowd.

Relatively reserved in composure, the audience, a quarter from the Chinese community, perked up at the mention of election goodies.

pakatan pokok sena ceramah 140112 lim guan eng "When Pakatan becomes (federal) government, Anwar Ibrahim becomes prime minister, we will abolish the PLUS highway toll," Lim said, to a round of hearty applause.

Also grabbing attention was the promise of RM1,000 a year for all 2.1 million people over 60 if Pakatan takes over.

Addressing the crowd in Mandarin and Bahasa Malaysia, he said: "When we gave aid to senior citizens, BN whacked us but now they do it, too.

"But we say if they want to copy, copy entirely. We give aid money every year, not once every five years."

Ever the crowd pleaser, even Mohamad Sabu had a hard time stirring up the quiet, but attentive crowd.

Winning some laughs from his matter-of-fact jokes, the PAS number two tells the audience to keep only a clean government in power. "If, when we are in power a Khir Toyo or Shahrizat Jalil emerges in Pakatan, vote for another government," he said.

Malay power intact

Meanwhile, the ceramah at Taman Seri Pinang, Sungai Petani saw the attendance of a mostly Malay crowd of around 1,000.

One of the ceramah's agenda is Pakatan's tireless attempts to explain why the three allies need to band together to beat the BN, which has lorded it over the country for 54 years.

PAS vice president Husam Musa said if DAP, a PAS ally defeats MCA, which partners Umno, "It does not weaken the power of the Malays".

"DAP is contesting about 46 parliamentary seats and PAS 76 in the whole country.

pakatan pokok sena ceramah 140112 6 "How can DAP with fewer seats manipulate PAS? This accusation is baseless," explained the Kubang Kerian MP.

"That is why we are in alliance with the DAP so that we can influence the position and support of the Chinese who are backing either MCA or the DAP, on behalf of the Pakatan Rakyat," he added.

The crowd, sitting on the ground on mostly their own mats together with the elderly and children, while attentive and alert, was shy to respond to the speeches.

But Selangor municipal councillor, Tan Ah Kau, an "anak jati" (true son of) Sungai Petani, managed to entertain them with his fluent Malay and excellent grasp of the community's idioms and phrases.

On sleeping, dreaming

"BN accuses us of sleeping in one bed but having different dreams (tidur sebantak tetapi mimpi lain-lain) but they are afraid even of sleeping together," he said, referring to the different ideologies of the three Pakatan allies- DAP, PAS and PKR.

pakatan pokok sena ceramah 140112 1 "Are they brave enough to organise an event where all races can sit as one? Where we present the same information to different ethnic groups?" queried Tan, filling in for DAP leader Nga Kor Ming who was kept away by poor health.

PKR deputy president Azmin Ali repeated his speech, centred around Anwar's political fate and personality, which he delivered in front of a 5,000-strong opposition ceramah in Seberang Jaya on Monday.

He spoke about how diligent Anwar was in fulfilling his Muslim obligations of praying five times a day no matter where he was, even when he was overseas on duty.

"They cannot implicate him with corruption charges, which is why they are hurling all kinds of sexual allegations against him," said the Gombak MP.

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