

'Voters accustomed to Khalid's absence'

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By The Malay Mail

Could the lukewarm response given to Abdul Khalid Ibrahim during a function in Bandar Tun Razak on Wednesday night be an indicator of dwindling support for him?

Abdul Khalid was named the Pakatan Rakyat candidate for the area by PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim during a ceramah which was held at a football field, with only 3,000 supporters turning up.

"Residents in nearby Kg Congo, Flat Sri Labuan and Sri Kota could have just walked to the function place, but they chose to stay at home instead," said a BN grassroots leader in the area.

The matter however was played down by Abdul Khalid's loyalist who blamed the weather for the poor turnout.

"I felt the response was good. Despite the rain, people still came to show their support," said PKR Bandar Tun Razak division secretary Othman Karim.

Othman also played down talks that Abdul Khalid's truancy in the area in the past five years would cost him his seat.

"He wears many hats ... he is Selangor menteri besar and also Ijok assemblyman. But he makes it a point to attend functions here at least two or three times a month."

"He does not have time to hangout at coffee shops or attend kenduri functions unlike other leaders, but he would always be here to attend programmes with the people."

'De facto' MP

Meanwhile, PKR Bandar Tun Razak division chief Azman Abidin said the people there had already become accustomed to a leader who is not able to spend much time in the area.

"The situation was the same during Tan Chai Ho's (left) time as he was a deputy minister and he could not spend much time with the people.

"But the people here want a leader who is able to speak for them in Parliament.

In 2008, Abdul Khalid defeated Tan with a majority of 2,515 votes. Azman who was appointed as Abdul Khalid's special representative also admitted that he was the "de facto" MP in the area.

However, he said problems faced by the people were mostly related to City Hall and he was able to resolve them without Abdul Khalid's help.

It had been reported that Abdul Khalid is expected to not contest in Ijok and is eyeing to contest for the Port Klang state seat instead.

Sources had claimed that Abdul Khalid may not be able to defend the Ijok seat as he had not spent much time in the area in the past five years.

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