

MCA Kulai candidate dodges debate challenge, again
MalaysiaKini.com
April 21, 2013

DAY 2 What's happening during the election campaigns around the country today? Quotable quotes, planned events and unplanned incidents as they take place.

10.22pm – Labis – Police orders a PAS ceramah in Felda Chemplak Barat to be stopped.

"We had to obtain the ceramah form from Majlis Daerah Segamat (MDS) and submit it to the police, but MDS is not open on Sunday.

"The police should give more leeway; it's general election time," says PAS' Tenang state seat candidate Md Zin Johar.

The ceramah only went on for a brief 15 minutes before stopping as the police and Election Commission officers quickly arrived.

9.00pm - Sarikei - DAP candidate Andrew Wong and his eight man team visits and holds a short ceramah at the three longhouses in Kg Tanah Putih, located within 10km from Sarikei town.

"Give Pakatan a chance (to rule), test us, if we can't do it, then change again," he said.

The Iban voters respond with applause and take time to read the manifesto leaflets brought by the team.

One of the tuai rumah tells the group that he can't vote for Pakatan as he is taking the government's allowance, but his wife will vote for Pakatan.

By the time the group reaches the last longhouse most of the occupants have gone to bed, but they wake up and come out to give the opposition a hearing.

Over the past few years the Iban community has changed in their willingness to entertain the opposition and adopt a more open attitude toward us, says campaign team secretary Wong Chin King.

6.30pm – Kulai – DAP Kulai candidate Teo Nie Ching accidentally bumps into her rival MCA's Tay Chin Hein in Taman Putri night market and reiterates her challenge

to Tay for a debate, first raised on nomination day.

Tay again rejects the challenge, saying that he has "no time" for debates blaming it on the voters.

The teacher-turned-businessman says he practises the principle of 'do more, talk less', a remark often made by former MCA president and incumbent Kulai MP Ong Ka Ting, who will campaign for Tay in the coming days.

"(I cannot debate) because my schedule during this general election has been fixed. The voters told me to do more and talk less. Since they have told me so, and if I want their support, I should follow what they asked me to do."

8.55pm - Labis - DAP's Labis parliamentary candidate S Ramakrishnan is having some language barrier problems of his own while speaking at a mini ceramah on the back of a small lorry in Labis town.

The mostly elderly Chinese crowd seem lost at Ramakrishnan's speech because it is in Malay and began chatting with each other.

Instinctively, Ramakrishnan punctuates his speech by shouting "May 5!" in Mandarin to grab the crowd's attention, who replied in Mandarin: "Change government!"

8.00pm - Kota Kinabalu - The audience at a ceramah in Kepayan Ridge waits patiently when a speaker at a MCA ceramah speaks in Chinese.

The moment he switches language to Bahasa Malaysia, the crowd starts clapping and cheering. It turns out they did not understand what he said before.

"Bahasa saya tidak cukup standard bah (My Bahasa Malaysia is not up to mark)," he said to laughter from the estimate 200 people in attendance.

The same happens when the MCA candidate for Luyang Agnes Shim (photograph: hands raised) speaks. Language barrier notwithstanding, Shim is a popular figure and received loud applause upon arrival, and especially when she breaks into a pantun (Malay poem).

5:40pm - Padang Rengas - Looks like Anwar Ibrahim's main theme today is Pakatan Rakyat's pledge to reduce oil prices, as he repeated the same message again in Kampung Sauk Baru.

"We have done our research. God willing, we will reduce fuel prices. We have resources. Why should we burden the people?" said Anwar during a short speech at a rally here.

He told the multiracial crowd that Pakatan will also make education free.

5.41pm - Tuaran - At times, politics can get confusing in Sabah, such as when PKR division leaders appear on campaigning material to support Independent candidates.

One particular photograph featured Tuaran PKR division chief Ansari Abdullah in party uniform, supporting his daughter Erveanna, depicted also in party uniform, who is contesting for the Tuaran Parliamentary seat as an Independent.

"Save the people from lies and deception. Let's defend real justice (keadilan sebenarnya)," read the caption to the photograph posted on Erveanna's Facebook page.

Also featured on the photograph was Ali Akbar Kawi, who is contesting in Sulaman, a state seat under Tuaran.

Ali Akbar and Erveanna wore PKR shirts on nomination day. They were accompanied by Ansari, who is sidelined in favour of new PKR ally Wilfred Bumburing.

4pm - Kluang - Incumbent Kluang MP Hou Kok Chung is keeping a low profile as usual and refuses to political statements against hi challenger Liew Chin Tong from DAP.

"I will try my best and let the people to judge what I have done in the past five years," said the MCA central committee member, when met after launching an investment forum at SJKC Chong Hwa II.

3.50pm - Raub - The Ban cyanide action committee has show down a pledge by Ho Khai Mun, MCA's candidate for the Raub parliamentary seat, to set up a committee to monitor cyanide use in gold mining.

The group's chairperson Wong Kim Hoong said Ho, as the Pahang state cabinet member, had promised in 2009 to take action against a gold mine in Raub should cyanide traces appear in the air.

"Now, the department of environment detects that 0.92 parts per million (ppm) of

hydrogen in the ambient air in Bukit Koman.

"But the government said that (as long as not exceeding) 4.7ppm, it will not affect people's health. 4.7ppm is Western Australia standard which is used in an uninhabited desert."

"Using 4.7ppm in the high population density in Bukit Koman, isn't Ho lying?" Wong, flanked by some 20 Raub residents.

Previously, Ho said that once elected, he will set up such a committee and will urge the federal government to shut down the gold mine should it violate any rules.

Ho was reportedly said that should he elected as Raub MP, he will set up a committee to monitor cyanide gold mine. He will urge the government to close down the mine should any violation of rule occurred.

3.20pm - Kota Marudu - Four PBS branches in Matunggong have been dissolved, as warned by former PBS supreme council member Jornah Mozihim who quit on Friday following the party's decision to field Sarapin Magana in the seat.

The Borneo Post reports that the Kamung Inukiran, Kampung Lompozou, Kampung Penampang and Kampung Ponikuan branches were dissolved with more expected soon.

Matunggong is a state seat located in Kota Marudu, the parliamentary constituency PBS number two and caretaker federal minister Maximus Ongkili is contesting.

He is facing stiff competition from ex-Upko vice president and now APS deputy president Maijol Mahap.

3.13pm - Labis - Labis' DAP candidate S Ramakrishnan holds a town hall meeting at Voules estate in a hall that was built by BN during the Tenang by-election.

"MCA thinks that with just Guinness Stout and some curry mutton, they can secure the Indian votes.

"We are no drunks and the Indian vote is not that easy to get," he said in fluent Tamil.

This was the same estate where he was prevented from entering by the locals during the by-election held in 2011.

The Labis parliamentary seat has the largest Indian population in Johor, at 15 percent.

3.00pm - Johor Bahru - Some 200 army veterans held a protest against PKR' Johor Bahru candidate Gen (Rtd) Md Hashim Hussein for "betraying the race and religion".

Led by Johor ex-servicemen association chief Onn Mohd Yassin, who is also the incumbent Layang-layang state assemblyperson, the protesters were gathered front of the service center of Shahrir Samad, BN candidate for Johor Bahru.

Shahrir turned up later. He said he was confident of retaining his seat, which he has held for almost three decades.

2.30pm - Kota Raja - Hindraf leader P Uthayakumar may be an underdog in Kota Raja against MIC secretary general S Murugesan and PAS incumbent Mariah Mahmud, but he is making his presence felt with posters of his face hung up all across Sentosa, Klang. He is also taking time walking into coffee shops and striking conversations with potential voters, mostly Indians.

The contrast in his campaigning with MIC's is clear to see. Right across his campaign office, a big banner promotes Murugesan's futsal competition next week, cheekily titled 'Piala Datuk S Murugesan'.

Residents also tell Malaysiakini about unidentified containers stopping by to drop off bags of rice for free, which are lapped up by many local Indians, before leaving abruptly.

2.20pm - Kota Raja - If you are a voter in Selangor on your birthday falls between now and May 5, chances are you will get a via SMS greeting from both BN and Pakatan Rakyat.

One voter told Malaysiakini that he received a birthday greeting from Mohd Zin Mohd, the Selangor BN coordinator at 1.19pm.

An hour later, another SMS was received from PAS' Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud, the incumbent Kota Raja MP.

"It was nice to see them show some personal touch. But I'm worried about how they got hold of my phone number," he says.

1.23pm - Parit Buntar - PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim is in the sleepy fishing

town of Kuala Kurau. Addressing a small crowd of 500 people, he reiterated Pakatan Rakyat's promise to reduce petrol prices once Pakatan Rakyat wrests Putrajaya.

After his short speech, the 65-year-old leader then went on a walkabout throughout town to canvass votes for the PAS' Mujahid Yusof Rawa (Parit Buntar), PAS' Abu Bakar Hussein (Titi Serong) and Yunus Jamhari (Kuala Kurau).

1pm - Sibul - A billboard featuring DAP's Lanang candidate Alice Lau and Sibul candidate Oscar Ling erected along Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman in Sibul Jaya has been sabotaged.

"The 16x8 feet giant billboard was cut in half either last night or this morning," said Lau.

"This is such a pointless and childish thing to do. This could have been done by someone who has been sent there or the supporters," she said, adding that no eyewitnesses have come forward.

DAP Lanang election director Yap Hoi Liong has lodged a police report, she said.

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