

Crowd at PKR's Segamat ceramah swells to 20,000

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DAY 5 What's happening during the election campaigns around the country today? Quotable quotes, planned events and unplanned incidents as they take place.

12.15am - Segamat: Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim arrives at the ceramah and although he largely repeats his speech when in Batu Pahat, the Segamat crowd of over 20,000 reacts enthusiastically.

"It is true that Chua Jui Meng had worked in Gelang Patah and we decided to place him there but (DAP supremo) Lim Kit Siang said he wanted to create a force in south Johor, so I said okay.

"It was a test of leadership for Chua and he was calm for some time and came out to back Kit Siang.

"I have seen his (Chua's) commitment and record to strengthen PKR in Johor and I appeal to the people of Segamat to give him your strongest support," he said.

11.20pm - Segamat: PKR's campaign's bus arrives, causing the crowd to go wild.

"It's just the campaign bus, Anwar (Ibrahim) is not on it, he'll arrive in 12 minutes.

"Sit down and give me a chance to speak," said PKR Segamat MP candidate Chua Jui Meng as the amused crowd burst into laughter.

10.51pm - Segamat: The crowd at Pakatan's ceramah in Kampung Abdullah has swelled to about 20,000, although organisers estimate the crowd size to now stand at around 30,000 people.

Taking the stage, PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub, and possible menteri besar candidate should opposition capture the state, sells his half Chinese parentage to the largely Chinese crowd, although there is substantial Malay and Indian presence too.

"I will not victimise the Chinese because my mother is also Chinese.

"My friends say if I don't win I can go to Hong Kong to become a film star because I am handsome like Jackie Chan," he quipped.

10pm - Penang: About 100 motorcyclists sporting 1Malaysia t-shirts rode their bikes past a DAP ceramah in Kampung Sungaiiku and started booing at the crowd and speakers.

A minor scuffle broke out between the two groups and in the midst of this, a China Press photographer received a box in his ear by a man wearing the 1Malaysia t-shirt.

The photographer said he will be lodging a police report at the Jelutong police station later.

10.00pm - Skudai: BN candidate for Gelang Patah Abdul Ghani Othman tells a gathering of 1,000 BN supporters in Dewanraya Taman Universiti that they don't really have much of a choice but to vote BN.

"The opposition alliance looks cannot be trusted to take care of this country. Until today they are still arguing among themselves over various issues.

"Can we vote them? What if they argue again?," says the outgoing Johor mentri besar, who added that Najib Abdul Razak and Muhyiddin Yassin were the only choice as the people's leaders.

9.45pm - Batu Pahat: Anwar Ibrahim is now speaking in Parit Botak before 1,000 people at a PAS-organised event. Deafening chants of "Reformasi" greets his arrival.

He starts his speech by quoting verses from the Quran to stress the values of integrity and justice for all races before speaking about the "conspiracy" to stop DAP from using its party logo for the election and how PKR and PAS came to their aid.

"This was not the wisdom of the leadership of DAP, PAS or PKR. We made that decision because we know the people have awoken. Hence I salute the people."

Prior to Anwar's arrival, a speaker from Selangor led the crowd, with their right hands raised, to make a pledge to support all Pakatan candidates.

9.35pm - Skudai: About 1,000 BN supporters are in Dewanraya Taman Universiti to welcome the arrival of BN deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin and state BN chief Abdul Ghani Othman.

Though the duo are late by about an hour, the response from crowd was very

enthusiastic.

The multiracial crowd, mostly youths and clad in BN tee-shirts, sang the 1Malaysia and BN song continuously until the BN leaders took their seats.

Also present are candidate for Nusajaya Zaini Abu Bakar, candidate for Skudai Liang Ah Chy and MCA Gelang Patah division chief Jason Teoh.

9.00pm - Batu Kawan: Penang BN chief Teng Chan Yeow stumbled upon his former colleague, ex-BN Batu Kawan BN coordinator A Mohan in a night market in Juru.

Mohan had quit Gerakan and BN last week after he was not made a candidate. He is contesting the Batu Kawan parliamentary and Bukit Tengah state seats as an Independent.

Upon meeting his former boss with his entourage, Mohan said "I was in Gerakan like you but beware of my new movement".

Mohan's supporters requested him to shake hands with Teng, who initially put out his hand, then held it back.

"Why should I shake your hands?" asked Teng, who also refused to shake hands with Mohan's supporters, before walking off.

Mohan was upset, saying Teng's action was not right.

"This is a gentleman fight. I took part in the democratic process and now we are opponents. Teng is a leader, he should respect everyone," Mohan told Malaysiakini.

"He should not simply turn away like that. This happened to me. Imagine what will happen to the rakyat!" he asked.

Mohan said during his campaign, he is distributing flyers on why he left Gerakan and was contesting as an Independent.

9.21pm - Segamat: More than 10,000 people have converged on a field at Kampung Abdullah, Segamat even though PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim is only expected to arrive at 11pm.

Anwar is lending his star power to prop up Pakatan's Segamat candidate Chua Jui Meng and Sekijang candidate Julailey Jemadi as well as candidates for four state seats.

9.15pm - Seremban: BN candidate for the Lobak state seat Titan Ho Kok Yew today met about 50 Orang Asli voters at Kampung Belihoi, Mantin.

He is accompanied by BN's candidate for the Seremban parliamentary seat Yeow Chai Tiam and Orang Asli Department representative Siti Aisyah.

530pm - Pulai: In an indirect swipe at PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim, BN deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin says the Johoreans will not accept a "foreign element" who claim to bring changes to Malaysia.

Speaking at a meet-the-people session in Pulai, Johor, a battlefield Anwar is also visiting later, Muhyiddin, the incumbent for Pagoh, said, "There is a leader coming here today. We all know that. We don't have to mention his name.

"The opposition is trying to make inroads into Johor and Johoreans will not accept that."

The caretaker deputy prime minister also launched an affordable housing scheme, comprising 304 houses priced from RM35,000 to RM80,000 for the Pulai people. The project will be built by the state investment arm Johor Corporation.

"When they promise you the moon, star and houses, don't believe them. Only the BN government can provide affordable houses for you all," Muhyiddin added.

5.05pm - Johor Bahru: Despite rain, a multiracial crowd of some 700 people crammed under a tent in Bandar Baru Uda, Johor Bahru, to listen to PKR leader Anwar Ibrahim, who is on a half-day campaign in Johor.

From the National Feedlot Corporation scandal to the doggy land deal between Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera and Selangor Wanita Umno chief Raja Ropiaah Raja Abdullah, Anwar stressed that this general election was about choosing a clean and transparent government.

For Johor, Anwar pledged that Pakatan Rakyat would not cancel the Iskandar Malaysia project should it come to power, but would make sure the project is not a profit scheme for BN cronies.

"I'm not against development projects, but if the project does not provide even one opportunity to the Malays, Chinese and Indians here, what is the use of such a project?"

He also poked fun at the BN candidate for the Guchil state seat in Kelantan, Nik Sapeia Nik Yusof, who attacked former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad with a pepper spray in Kelantan in 2006.

"Yes, I'm not joking. Luckily I was in jail, if not they would say is my fault.

"I never thought Umno would field a candidate who attacked Mahathir... I don't understand Umno anymore," added Anwar, a former Umno deputy president who will speak at two mega ceramah in Batu Pahat and Segamat tonight.

1.46pm - Muar: Johor DAP chief Dr Boo Cheng Hau has been spotted helping the party's incumbent Bakri MP Er Teck Hwa to campaign in the town of Muar.

"Er (far right in photo) may not have any higher education qualifications, but he has proven himself capable by raising several issues in Parliament.

"We cannot expect to field heavyweights everywhere, we need to give chances to others to groom them into heavyweights," he said.

Er's opponent is lawyer Lee Ching Yong of MCA.

Boo added that he, too, will not be defending his position as Johor DAP chief to allow space for new blood in the next party election.

1.30pm - Keningau: First-time voter Jason Majihin says he is happy with incumbent MP Joseph Pairin Kitingan.

This is especially after caretaker premier Najib Abdul Razak announces that he is taking up Pairin's suggestion for two new school halls and scholarships for poor students from the interiors there.

Pairin's brother Jeffrey is leading the opposition party Star, and is contesting against Pairin in Keningau. Another contender is PKR's information chief Stephen Sandor.

When asked on Jeffrey, the self-employed Jason says that Jeffrey should consider bringing Star into the BN fold.

"That way, his ideas can be taken to Parliament," he says after the event at the Keningau Sports Complex.

The roughly 5000 who attended received packed lunches and were earlier

entertained by local artistes.

12.41pm - Shah Alam: Incumbent Klang MP Charles Santiago announces that the Shah Alam High Court has refused to grant leave (permission) for overseas voter S Dinesh to strike off his name from the electoral roll, despite the fact that the court recognises that such fraud happens.

It is reported that a former Umno assistant registrar had registered Dinesh in March 2012, although Dinesh and his father denies having consented, nor had they known of the registration until much later.

Charles adds that in spite of the court's decision, more people have been coming to see him as of yesterday, with a total of three more individuals who have complained of such instances.

This includes a lady who resides in Klang, but later found out that her name has been registered in Terengganu, and another instance of a mother who found out that her physically and mentally challenged 25-year-old daughter had also been registered as a voter, although the family had never done so on her behalf.

12.00pm - Sibul: A 12x8 feet billboard erected by DAP at the Sibul Gateway has been perceived as defamatory by the Sibul municipal council, who has sent out the order for the billboard to be taken down today.

The billboard is identical to the one set up by BN's Sibul candidate Vincent Lau based on his posture and the slogans used. Lau's version had the slogan "From people to people" written on it, whereas DAP's billboard used "From people to cronies".

In a press conference, DAP's Sibul and Lanang operations director Ngieng Ping Sing says the party refuses to take down the billboard because they do not find it defamatory as had been stated by the local council.

"If you take down the billboard, we will erect another one," he vows.

12.00pm - Nibong Tebal: Penang police chief Abdul Rahim Hanafi says his force has found two "improvised explosive devices" at a BN ceramah held last night, and which was also attended by state BN chief Teng Chang Yeow after he spoke to a small crowd of about 300 in Juru.

One of the devices had exploded at 10.15pm, in which a party worker had been injured by pieces of debris from the explosion.

"The police bomb squad found the second device at 2am and detonated it an hour later," he says at a press conference in Penang today.

"It was done by a professional as both of the devices have timers. However, they were made to frighten and not to injure because they emit loud noise, but no splinters," he claims.

11.15am - Kuala Lumpur: On allegations that the police have started casting advance votes yesterday, Bukit Aman has posted an immediate response in Facebook stressing that what is alleged to be advance voting by the police is actually their process of postal voting, and urges all parties to stop the circulation of false news through the social media.

Several blogs started circulated photos of ballot slips for the parliamentary constituencies of Setiawangsa and Bandar Tun Razak, Kuala Lumpur that were alleged to be distributed to members of the police force for the advance voting process, thus causing an uproar among netizens yesterday.

"What had been circulated in several blogs that the police had started advance voting is actually postal voting. Thus, the claims that the police have started advance voting before April 30 could be said to be slander," read the Facebook posting from Bukit Aman.

10.50am - Sungai Besar: According to a report by Utusan Malaysia today, a petrol bomb had been hurled at a BN operations centre in Parit 9, Sungai Lemau in the wee hours of the morning, thus causing the building to catch fire.

However, this was soon discovered by a resident who quickly alerted the Federal Village Security and Development Committees (JKKKP), and the fire at the 30-year-old hall was put out by party members on duty.

A police report was later lodged on the 4am incident at the Sekinchan police station.

10.30am - Alor Setar: The side of the 'pondok panas' of Bersama candidate Jawahar Raja Abdul Wahid, who is contesting the parliamentary seat of Alor Setar and the Bakar Bata state seat - was set on fire by irresponsible parties around 5am today.

Aside from the burning incident, his posters - which had been attached on trees nearby the 'pondok panas' in Jalan Sultanah Bahiyah - were torn and replaced with

posters of caretaker Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

"I do not want to accuse anyone. I have left it to the police to investigate the matter. I have no enemies; this action is political in nature because the general election is getting close," he says, adding that he has already informed about the incident to the police.

10.00am - Alor Setar: Berjasa candidate Abdul Fisol Mohd Isa visits the Taman Wira day market where he seeks to introduce himself to locals and traders as the Alor Setar parliamentary seat and Derga state seat candidate.

There is also handed out his party's manifesto and campaign posters.

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