

## **Muhyiddin to kickstart BN campaign on Sunday**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Apr 10, 2015**

**By Susan Loone**

All roads have been leading to Permatang Pauh since the Election Commission declared May 7 as polling day for the parliamentary seat.

Both sides of the political divide are sharpening their swords for the eventual battle, which will officially start on April 25, the nomination day.

For starters, BN national deputy chief and Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin will be in town on Sunday, on a working visit from 9am to 2pm.

Muhyiddin (left) will be shaking hands with members of the public at a food court in Seberang Jaya - one of the three constituencies under Permatang Pauh.

And later in the day, he is to meet with Umno leaders, including the by-election team, at the party's 'Transformasi' building.

Muhyiddin will be briefed on the state BN's preparation and cooperation and would try to close ranks among the various divisions or leaders who may be affected by the recent spat between Najib and his former boss, Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Although the odds may seem to be not in their favour, with the recent passing of more restrictive laws by Parliament and the implementation of the goods and services tax (GST), the ruling coalition is eager to try and wrest the seat from PKR.

The seat was declared vacant after Anwar Ibrahim was disqualified as MP on March 16. The former deputy prime minister first won the seat in 1982.

### **Umno submitted three names**

To show its seriousness, Umno has submitted three names - two seniors and one newcomer - as candidates to BN national chief and Prime Minister Najib Razak.

It is highly speculated that the names include local personalities from Permatang Pauh - the division Umno chief Mohd Zaidi Mohd Said, GE13 candidate Mazlan Ismail and the newcomer, who is also a local boy.

Although Penang BN have been pretty quiet on the political front since losing massively to Pakatan Rakyat in the 2013 national polls, the coalition seem to be back on track to face the coming battle.

It is learnt that state BN has held its fifth meeting at the state Gerakan headquarters on Jalan Macalister on Wednesday and local leaders from each party including MCA and MIC

have agreed to put aside their differences and help big brother Umno fight this war.

When asked, state BN chief Teng Chang Yeow admitted that Permatang Pauh is a tough nut to crack as it has long been a PKR stronghold, but says "we will try our best".

He dismissed threats by possible presence of independent candidates, saying that their role, if any, would only be as "spoilers but will not affect the overall outcome" of the polls.

But more worrying for the BN may be PKR's strategy to whip up sentiments of anger towards GST - an issue the opposition has been harping on since last year.

But Teng (left) said "it has been implemented for a week now, we will try to dissolve whatever problems which may arise from the issue by the time the polls come".

Not to be outdone, Pakatan Rakyat too is all set to defend the seat which they felt had been unfairly seized from Anwar as he serves a five-year sentence since Feb 10 at the Sungai Buloh prison for a sodomy conviction.

He lost the seat after his family's application to seek royal pardon was rejected by the Pardon's board chaired by the Agong.

### **Pakatan vowed to work as a team**

Penang Pakatan Rakyat has met last Thursday and vowed to work as a team to see this battle through with Anwar and his family.

PKR will be launching its Permatang Pauh election machinery at Dataran Guar Perahu on Tuesday at 8.30pm.

This would be followed by ex-army officers like sacked Major Zaidi Ahmad, who will launch an NGO together with his peers, to help Pakatan win in the polls.

Although there are grouses of nepotism even from Pakatan supporters, Anwar's wife and PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail seem set to be the candidate.

She held the seat from 1999 to 2008 when Anwar was in prison for abuse of power related to his first sodomy charge from 2000 to 2006.

"Permatang Pauh is a special place. It is a seat that symbolises the reformasi movement, and so it is only right that we defend it for Anwar," said PKR Permatang Pauh division chief Amir Ghazali.

"This is why we accept Wan Azizah to be the candidate. She is the symbol of how Anwar has been unjustly treated by certain quarters to end his political career," he added.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/294901>