

Team Azmin kicks off with a bang
Malaysiakini.com
October 16, 2010

Mohamed Azmin Ali's PKR deputy presidency campaign entered fifth gear almost immediately after lodging in his acceptance form for nominations today.

Kicking off with a literal bang, his supporters arranged a *gendang* (drum) welcome to fanfare his entry into the party headquarters this morning to confirm his candidacy.

It is a stark departure from previous months of intense but rather quiet lobbying and strategising, with Azmin relatively tight-lipped about his chances and selective with exclusive media interviews.

Even fellow elections aspirants have been tight-lipped and coy about their support for him.

The situation just a few hours after the handing of his candidacy papers is significantly different, with his lineup clear as daylight during the function organised to officially mark the start of Azmin's campaign.

No short of pomp

Dubbed 'Reformasi towards Putrajaya', the launch held at Petaling Jaya's Dewan Sivik saw all roads leading to the venue littered with banners depicting Azmin with an outstretched arm, the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya beckoning in the background.

Accompanying him on stage were heavyweights including Penang deputy chief minister Mansor Othman, Wanita chief Zuraida Kamarudin, Batu MP Tian Chua and Selangor exco Xavier Jayakumar, among others.

One by one, many took to the stage to sing his praises.

Azmin in turn peppered his 'acceptance for candidacy' speech with Latin, Tamil and Mandarin phrases.

The audience of some 1,500 supporters were visibly lapping it up.

However, in stark contrast to his rival Zaid Ibrahim's abrasive style against party elders, Azmin instead called for grace and respect for the seniors leaders.

"We must appreciate the sacrifices of (outgoing deputy president Syed Husin Ali). We are grateful for all the work he has done to his party," said Azmin in his speech.

Zaid had previously been reported to have openly criticised the outgoing deputy, after the latter had chided the former minister for not having attended party meetings.

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