

**BN's 'public servant' promise to serve  
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Plucked from his cushy manager's posting in the federal land development agency Kesedar, the BN candidate for the Galas by-election did not seem to have any trouble making the switch from a public servant to a servant of the people.

Joining the campaign trail on the first day of campaigning as a candidate, former Kesedar Sungai Terah operations office manager Abdul Aziz Yusoff effortlessly projected the persona of a man of the people.

Speaking at a Kesedar-organised event in the Batu Papan polling district along with Deputy Premier Muhyiddin Yassin, Abdul Aziz (*left in pic*) played the part of down-to-earth man well, playing heavily on his humble education as compared to the PAS candidate Dr Zulkefli Mohamad's medical degree.

"There is now the issue of me only having SPM qualifications as opposed to one who is a qualified doctor.

"To be a leader, it does not depend on a long list of degrees, but what is more important is the capability and willingness to serve," said Abdul Aziz to about 400 people who attended the event.

More sure of himself in contrast to his taciturn solo first encounter with the press, one day prior to nomination, Abdul Aziz also exuded an easy confidence and familiarity with public speaking, which his opponent lacks.

He argued that coming from humble educational beginnings does not stop one from serving the public, using his 20 years of service in Kesedar as proof that it is possible, and as an example of his track record of serving the people.

Abdul Aziz likened himself to former deputy premier, the late Ghafar Baba, a man of similar humble beginnings.

"He not only became the deputy prime minister but also served the people of the entire country."

Staying true to the humble persona, Abdul Aziz claimed that he will not promise anything to the people of Galas.

'Give me a chance'

"However, I give them my pledge to do all that I am able to and to give my best effort to give them a chance (to serve)," he added.



people to gain their votes is somewhat  
e to heap claims and guarantees that the BN is  
o Galas and promised them many benefits

me event, told the crowd that he has solved all



their water supply, land and rubber replanting woes, which he claimed the PAS-led state government did not help them with.

This also holds true to Abdul Aziz's pledge to hold a friendly contest, which he has so far continued to honour, but which is not heeded by Umno supporters.

For example the khalwat (close proximity) allegations made by bloggers seen as being close to Umno against Dr Zulkefli mere hours after his candidacy was announced.

Add to that, a tongue-in-cheek comment made by Batu Papan BN electoral box director Shaari Lembut at the same event, who joked that the main difference between the BN and PAS candidates is their state of health.

"You don't need to elect a sick one, there is a healthy man here," he jibed.

Dr Zulkefli is seen to be unhealthy because of his body size while Abdul Aziz is said to be fitter for being slim and lean.

But despite his new-found glibness in speaking, Abdul Aziz still did not touch on any major issues, other than asking those in attendance to vote for him.

The only issue-based statement he made was to say that the issue of clean water supply to several Orang Asli communities and other related matters seem to give him the edge.

Track record

"The real issue is the disappearance of the assemblyperson from Galas for more than two years," said Abdul Aziz, reminding the people that during that time they had to fend for themselves.

The former Galas state representative, Chek Hashim Sulaima of PAS, fell victim to colon cancer and had to abandon his duties for two years as he battled the disease.

According to Shaari further, Abdul Aziz is touted to be the favourite candidate in the area, labelled as a BN 'white zone' and comprising of 1,750 registered voters, as well as amongst youth in general as he is seen to represent new jobs and development.

This is something which may hold true with youth in other areas and all of Galas, as the lack of jobs has been tipped as one issue that may sway the youths to vote for the party with the most to offer them.

It also helps that Abdul Aziz is more able to engage with the public as seen during his walkabouts in Galas. His time in government service dealing with Kesedar settlers probably gives him the experience in being approachable to the people.

But all in all, his years of service are not only to the government but also to Umno, as he is a long-time member who rose to the rank of division secretary. One wonders if he is truly sincere, or just another silver-tongued politician.

And the hypocritical actions of his supporters who continue to flout his own promises, calls

into question whether his 'humble' act is just a good-cop bad-cop smokescreen routine to pull the wool over the eyes of the public.

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