

Lukewarm reception for Anwar, Muhyiddin
Malaysiakini.com
October 30, 2010

Holding high office does not seem to mean much to Batu Sapi voters, who gave a not-so-rousing reception to the nation's top politicians from both sides of the divide last night.

As the campaign for the parliamentary seat heats up, voters seem less inclined to entertain leaders flying in all the way from the Peninsula to make their pitch for their respective leaders.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin endured the red-faced embarrassment of seeing people getting up and leaving as he was giving his speech at a Majlis Mesra Rakyat at the Sandakan multi-purpose hall.

Prior to that, around half the hall emptied after the 700-odd invited guests were done listening to Chief Minister Musa Aman's speech on how development can only come through BN.

And considering that an 8pm dinner is considered late in Sandakan, the decision to have Muhyiddin speak at 10.20pm was obviously keeping the invited guests past their usual bed time.

To his credit, the deputy premier soldiered on with his speech, telling those remaining that the BN "means business" in making sure the country becomes a developed nation by 2020.

batu sapi by electon muhyiddin speech 291010Muhyiddin acknowledged that the Batu Sapi by-election is an important gauge of public opinion on the current ruling coalition and its policies, but stressed that their competition is not capable of providing for the people.

Taking a jab at PKR candidate Ansari Abdullah's two falls into the sea, he said it was "bad feng shui" for PKR.

"Why choose him if he cannot do anything for you? I think if this seat is given away to others, it will be a sheer waste," he said.

Muhyiddin also countered Sapp president and Batu Sapi candidate Yong Teck Lee's Sabah for Sabahans slogan, calling it an "old story" that rings hollow among Sabahans themselves.

"This is an old story, and the people have moved forward. There are many Sabahans who hold important positions in the government," he said.

Hit and miss for Anwar

Pakatan Rakyat de-facto leader Anwar Ibrahim, meanwhile, received a mixed bag of results last night, as his star power that normally draws thousands in Peninsular Malaysia failed to get more than a few curious souls in Batu Sapi.

batu sapi anwar ceramah 291010 kampung lupak meluas 01At his first stop at Tai Tong in Taman Mawar, hardly 100 people in the Chinese majority area turned up to listen to his brief address in support of their candidate, Ansari Abdullah.

His arrival did swell the numbers a bit from the earlier turnout of around 60 people and he managed to coax a bit of spirit from the assembled crowd when he declared Pakatan's plan to take over Sabah and Putrajaya, but their applause was few and far between.

Anwar had better luck at Kg Gas, where Ansari fell into the sea a second time earlier in the day, attracting an enthusiastic crowd of some 50 people.

batu sapi anwar ceramah 291010 tai tung kindergarden taman mawarHis biggest challenge of the night however was Kg Lupak Meluas, where just 20 were in attendance to hear the former deputy premier speak.

Sensing their passiveness , Anwar took a more motivational approach, appointing all who attended as "special officers" for PKR's door-to-door campaign.

"Please inform all your friends and relatives to help organise such events, and ask everybody to attend. Then we can go in to the kampong," he told the crowd, which remained unimpressed.

'Voters still deciding'

Anwar, however, defended Pakatan's showing so far in this campaign, saying at a press conference this morning that Batu Sapi voters are not aggressive and are still keeping their options open.

azlanHe claimed that the Chinese are "shifting positively" towards Pakatan and away from Sapp, as the latter is still unclear in its stand against Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's administration.

"The only clear thing from Sapp is Sabah for Sabahans, but Sabah autonomy can only be achieved through Pakatan Rakyat," he said.

Anwar admitted that BN goodies that come with by-elections may sway bumiputera voters, but remains optimistic about their chances.

"That is why we need to explain to them... ask for more gifts but when voting, vote for Pakatan," he said, adding that the mood towards Pakatan from bumiputera voters is good.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/146849>