

**Mid-campaign mind games in Galas**  
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As the nine-day campaigning period for the Galas by-election reached midpoint yesterday, both sides of the contest stepped up intensity deploying all the usual tricks in their political arsenal.

Both PAS and BN hope to throw a spanner into their each other's campaign, while looking for shortcuts to boost their own position.

NONThe Islamic party pulled out the phantom voter card, crying wolf over allegations of BN doppelgangers impersonating voters, though without hard evidence to back their claims.

Campaign advisor and Kota Bharu MP Wan Abdul Rahim Wan Rahman cast the first stone, saying rather coyly that a desperate BN will resort to questionable means.

"The BN still has a lot to do to win in Galas. They are desperate, and when they are desperate, they resort to their traditional practice in elections.

"I believe they will use the registration department to issue duplicate identity cards of Galas voters to BN supporters, who will then vote in place of real voters," said Wan Abdul Rahim.

However he admitted that he had no proof and is only stating his suspicions based on "previous experience" with BN in elections.

The allegations continue to be played up by other PAS leaders including Galas election director Abdul Halim Abdul Rahman, but they remain phantom claims thus far.

Jumping jacks

Umno, on the other hand, brought into play its usual game of political jumping jacks, as the coalition started to showcase 'defectors' from their opponent's camp, parading them like newly acquired expensive pets.

galas by election leaflet attacking pakatan 31010 0414 PAS defectors from Kampung Tiong Baru handed over their Umno membership forms to Gua Musang Wanita Umno chief Wan Hazani Wan Mohd Nor on Friday, moaning over PAS hypocrisy and saying they have seen the light in Umno's ways and repented.

PAS has not yet announced its own batch of political jumpers; though this is a strategy that even the Islamic party does not shy from.

The psychological impact of such crossovers can churn sentiments and could tip the scales of political balance.

However, the jumping jack strategy is usually an Umno staple as it has the most resources to convince potential turncoats.

However a PAS strategist working in the Galas campaign told Malaysiakini, that it is a PAS counter strategy to use such opportunities to plant their own 'Trojan horses' into Umno, lulling the party into a false sense of security and getting the goodies, while still voting for

the Islamic party.

It is interesting to note that such political crossings happens with regularity near elections or by-elections, leaving one to wonder if there is a political 'jumper' directory, or of 'Trojan horses' somewhere that Umno or PAS both keep, or perhaps these are short term convenient purchases at the '7-Eleven' of political expediency!

Of soccer fever and mending roads

NONEDespite the promised lull in the campaigning in Galas, or as Umno Youth deputy chief Razali Ibrahim puts it a "90 minute ceasefire" for last night's Malaysia Cup final between Kelantan Red Warriors and long time rival the Negeri Sembilan Rusas, the undercurrents still pulled hard.

Both parties did their best to hijack the football agenda into their campaign, hoping to latch on to the fabled Kelantanese fanaticism for the sport.

Large screen television sets were set up by both parties to entice crowds to their campaign venues while PAS and BN both provided buses to transport those who want to attend the final in Bukit Jalil Stadium.

BN has also been alleged of distributing free tickets to the game in Galas in an apparent attempt to buy votes.

Pix of road being re-surfaced in galasHowever, PAS's criticism softened when it announced that it would pay for the transport cost of outstation voters. BN responded on cue that this was tantamount to vote-buying.

Amidst the football fever in Galas, the roads inside the town of Gua Musang and leading to it, are being freshly tarred black, mere days after some locals complained that the road that Gua Musang MP Razaleigh Hamzah had built had turned white from years of use and neglect.

The workers repairing the roads in town wore no badge nor were their trucks and machinery marked, so it is unclear if this is being done by the federally controlled Public Works Department or the PAS-led state government.

shaziman abu mansorBut Works Minister Shaziman Mansor (right) is scheduled to tour several roads being mended by the PWD outside Gua Musang town, after meeting with Ku Li today.

It would seem that one side or the other is trying to outdo the competition, hoping the freshly laid tar would pave the way into the Galas voters' hearts.

With the endgame mere days away, we can expect more of these sleight of hand maneuvers, from both sides of the electoral conflict..