

**A show of clout by PBS  
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Deputy Chief Minister and PBS president Joseph Pairin Kitingan today announced a RM16 million road upgrading project for Jalan Sibuga in Batu Sapi, as his party grapples with accusations of being nothing more than Umno lackeys.

NONEOver the past week since campaigning started in Batu Sapi, both SAPP and Sabah Pakatan Rakyat have been attacking PBS for being weak and a tool of Chief Minister and state Umno liaison chief Musa Aman.

Pairin's (right) latest announcement is seen as a calculated move to counter the opposition allegations, with his aide informing the media that Pairin had "personally called" Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak this morning to get approval for the project, which will start next year.

When making his announcement at a press conference at Sanbay Hotel, Pairin said this is one of the many "good programmes" that only the BN government is capable of implementing and should be supported by the rakyat.

"This (project) is special because it was raised to the attention of our Prime Minister and he agreed (to the project). Whatever we do is a present to the people, because it is for the betterment of the people," he said.

Pairin, who is also state Infrastructure Development Minister, added that another RM2.3 million has been set aside for on-going projects to fix and upgrade 12 roads in and around Sandakan.

Umno's handouts 'shameful'

At a separate press conference, PKR vice-president Azmin Ali sniped at Wanita Umno for giving RM20 cash handouts to the public at a dinner in Batu Sapi two days ago, calling it an insult to the voters.

NONECommenting on Malaysiakini's report yesterday, Azmin (left) said it is a common practice by the ruling coalition and as usual, the election commission will brush it aside as a non-issue.

"This is shameful. A party that gained billions of ringgit in wealth from logging only handed out RM20. This is insulting Batu Sapi voters, and the answer to them (BN) will be to defeat them," he said.

Azmin, who flew in to join the campaign yesterday, said they have seen "significant improvements" in their chances, particularly in Chinese areas where he claimed they have gained "extraordinary support".

PKR advisor and Pakatan Rakyat de facto chief Anwar Ibrahim however accused BN officials of "guarding" the numerous Muslim bumiputera-majority kampongs in Batu Sapi, going to the extent of warning villagers not to meet opposition campaigners.

"Before our leaders visit the kampongs, we need to send in a convoy to buka jalan (pave

the way) first... only some brave villagers dare to come out," Anwar said.

Azmin nevertheless remained adamant that they will do everything they can to reach out to the Muslim bumiputeras, who make up about 60 percent of Batu Sapi's voters, before polling day this Thursday.

"Over the remaining two days, we will give special focus on Muslim bumiputera areas to make sure they have the correct information before polling day on Nov 4," he said.

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