

**Ansari: We've more support than SAPP and PBS
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Sabah Pakatan Rakyat's candidate for Batu Sapi, Ansari Abdullah, brushed aside talk of being the weakest contestant in this by-election, saying the opposition coalition is more than capable of taking the fight to BN come polling day this Nov 4.

The veteran politician is confident of his chances, stressing that PKR secured more votes than rivals SAPP and BN component party PBS in the 2008 general election.

"PKR got more votes than SAPP and PBS put together. People seem to forget we got more than 120,000 votes in the last election," he said in a Malaysiakini exclusive interview.

Ansari claimed that in Batu Sapi alone, PKR was assured of 4,500 votes in 2008 and had it not been for alleged police interference, their candidate would have entered the race with a strong chance of winning.

He said when their candidate came to the nomination centre to register, he was sidetracked by a special branch officer who interviewed the candidate until after the submission period ended, effectively keeping him out of the contest.

"This is interference by the police. Our candidate was sabotaged by the police but the mainstream media simply covered up the incident," he said.

batu sapi sapp debate turn forum 311010 ansari arrive 04Ansari also blamed the mainstream media for spinning issues related to Sabah PKR, denying that there are internal problems as widely reported in the media.

"If you talk about problems, Umno has worse problems, PBS has problems, BN has problems with LDP, (SAPP president and Batu Sapi candidate) Yong (Teck Lee) has problems with his generals.

"The BN media spin it in such a way that we look like we are having problems, but (state PKR chief) Thamrin (Jaini Ahmad) was there with me on nomination day and he's now director of operations (for the Batu Sapi by-election)," he said.

Full backing from Pakatan chiefs

Ansari acknowledged that it was tough going for PKR Sabah in the 2008 general election as they had little support from their national leadership, but pointed out that things are different this time around with most of the top guns coming or already here for Pakatan's campaign.

batu sapi by election ansari in bandage 291010"At that time we worked on our own. (DAP advisor Lim) Kit Siang came to Tawau and (Sri Tanjung assemblyperson) Jimmy Wong earned a win. Now everybody is here, the whole Pakatan Rakyat machinery is here," he said.

Ansari also brushed aside the perception that he was chosen to draw more support from the majority Muslim bumiputera voting base in Batu Sapi, though he acknowledged that the campaign machinery will still have to work along those lines to properly address the

concerns of the different ethnic groups.

"This is not my fight, this is Pakatan's fight. We have enough guns to tackle the Chinese and each of the (ethnic) groups.

"So what if I've never won an election... I prefer to be remembered as a person who served the community, rather than an MP or Adun (assemblyperson) who failed the community," he said..

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