

Opposition candidate: UMNO using racial tactics
Malaysiakini.com
Mar 05, 2008
Syed Jaymal Zahiid

Racial tactics allegedly employed by Barisan Nasional (BN) will render the fight to win the MCPX Semenyih state seat in Selangor tougher, according to Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) pro-tem secretary-general S Arutchelvan.

psm semenyih campaign 280208 peopleAlthough, Arutchelvan (centre), who is contesting the seat under the PKR banner, is confident of winning, he is however worried about BN using the racial card to its advantage in the Malay-majority area.

"We find it hard to penetrate the traditional Malay kampung (village) areas. These kampung are known to be Umno strongholds but not so much because they help the people out.

"But only because they have been using racial tactics to strengthen their control," he told Malaysiakini when met at the party's operations centre in Semenyih yesterday.

In the March 8 polls, Arutchelvan will be facing Umno/BN newcomer Johan Aziz.

Quizzed further, Arutchelvan said he has been receiving information from Malay supporters in the area that BN has been telling voters that it will be a sin to vote for a non-Muslim candidate.

"As a response, I have written a personal letter to all the Muslim residents to ignore this as PSM stands for justice and equality, in line with Islamic teachings," he said.

Money vs ideology

Apart from this, Arutchelvan also claimed that BN has been giving out goodies in the form of house reparation. He also said he is yet to meet his opponent despite polling day being three days away.

"We cannot fight BN only because of this kind of campaigning. They have the financial muscle to pull such stunts but if we go on an ideology to ideology contest, they will fall out," he added.

psm semenyih campaign 280208 chattingFinancial wise, Arutchelvan said the depiction might be that of PSM not having the monetary power to campaign but this he said was not entirely true.

"We might not have that kind of money but we are doing well despite what people think. We have been receiving donations in the form of banners, transportation and someone even lent us his PA system (audio equipments)," he said

The PSM leader added that he is in good spirits.

"We have been receiving tremendous support from those in the urban areas, from the Chinese, Malays and Indians.

"We even have supporters from PPP, MIC, MCA and Gerakan (BN coalition parties) telling us that we have their support because they are tired of Umno," he claimed.

Semenyih, with a 53.7 percent Malay population and followed by Chinese 28 .8 percent has been Arutchelvan's backyard for more than 20 years.

The Indians constitute 17.1 percent and mostly dominate the plantations and are the poorest in Semenyih.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/79198>