

Anwar's 61st birthday wish - a big win
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Opposition coalition's premier designate Anwar Ibrahim has a birthday wish - a big win in Permatang Pauh by-election to send a clear message to the nation that it was time to change Malaysia's political landscape.
MCPX

"It's time for Barisan Nasional to go and Pakatan Rakyat to rule.

anwar ibrahim taman pauh event 100808 02"Only a big win can arm Pakatan with the power to bring about change," he told some 15,000 crowd at Saturday's by-election rally in Penang mainland's Taman Pauh before celebrating his 61st birthday at the stroke of midnight.

The birthday boy's wife and PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Penang Chief Minister and DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng were among the scores of Pakatan Rakyat leaders and supporters to join the celebrations.

anwar ibrahim taman pauh event 100808 05The Permatang Pauh parliamentary by-election was called after incumbent MP Wan Azizah resigned late last month to pave way for Anwar to earn his right to return to the august House for the first time in 10 years.

Nomination day is on Saturday, Aug 16, while polling day falls on Tuesday, Aug 26.

anwar ibrahim taman pauh event 100808 01Anwar reminded Permatang Pauh voters of their 'national duty' to the rest of country's 27 million people, stressing that the by-election was all about "good governance, poverty eradication, elimination of corrupt rule, and an unjust legal and judicial system.

"It's not about me. It's about the nation. Give us a big win on the behalf of all Malaysians to trigger the political change," said the PKR de facto leader.

Allow workers time off to vote

Anwar later launched the Pakatan Rakyat Youth machinery led by PKR Youth chief Shamsul Iskandar. Also present were DAP Socialist Youth leader and Taiping MP Nga Kor Ming and PAS Youth chief and Kubang Kerian MP Salahuddin Ayub.

Meanwhile, PKR Youth will send letters to factory owners and company management across Penang and southern Kedah to remind them of their legal obligation to allow employees from Permatang Pauh to cast votes on polling day.

In the letter, the employers would be told of legal infringement if they prevented employees from exercising their balloting rights.

anwar ibrahim taman pauh event 100808 06Shamsul said the employers would be warned that it was an offence under Section 3(N) of the Election Offences Act 1954 if one were to prevent another from casting vote.

"Since polling is a working day, the employers must allow a time-off period, perhaps a half-day leave, to employees from Permatang Pauh to cast their ballots.

"They are not just legally, but also morally required to do so," he told the rally.

A sizeable number of young and middle-aged voters from Permatang Pauh work in multinational companies in industrial parks in Penang, as well as Kulim and Sungai Petani in nearby Kedah.

The letter will be sent on Aug 18, two days after the nomination day, and Shamsul said PKR Youth delegations would also meet with employers, if necessary, to press home the issue.

Use indelible ink, EC told

Shamsul is also set to lead a Pakatan Rakyat delegate to Putrajaya tomorrow to hand over a memorandum urging the Election Commission to use the indelible ink at the by-election.

"We want the indelible ink to be introduced to prevent any electoral malpractices," he said.

Should he win, Anwar will be back in Parliament in time for the 2009 Budget, scheduled to be tabled by Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on Aug 30.

anwar ibrahim taman pauh event 100808 03"Wouldn't it be nice to see Anwar standing in front of Abdullah when the premier unveils the budget?" asked Salahuddin (photo, far right) to an avid crowd.

Many Pakatan Rakyat leaders, although confident of a victory, nonetheless cautioned supporters not to be complacent and take an Anwar victory for granted.

They expect Umno to go all out to discredit Anwar and smear his credibility in order to win the by-election, and reminded Permatang Pauh voters not to fall into its trap.