

'Thank you, Toh'
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Beh Lih Yi

The open pledge of support from a Barisan Nasional leader has given an added boost to opposition stalwart Anwar Ibrahim's campaign in Permatang Pauh.
MCPX

Describing it as a positive sign, the PKR leader expressed his gratitude to Penang-based Gerakan leader and former state exco Dr Toh Kin Woon.

anwar ibrahim tengiri market permatang pauh by election 180808 01 "I am very encouraged by Toh's support," he told reporters after visiting a market in Seberang Jaya this morning.

"He is not only a friend but known to be one of the few political leaders who is highly principled and consistent."

Anwar, who will be contesting in the Aug 26 Permatang Pauh by-election, also revealed that he and Toh have maintained contact despite being on opposite sides of the political fence.

"It's important for people to realise that on issues of democracy, (fighting against) corruption and human rights, we have been very consistent," he added.

'It's a good sign'

Anwar said his wife, PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, their family and the Pakatan Rakyat leadership also welcomed the gesture by the Gerakan veteran.

"We think it's a good sign. (It shows) people with principles with the BN will finally choose a Pakatan with principles.

dr toh kin won permatang pauh by election 180808 02 "I think for Toh (right) to do that, it must be a very serious issue and he must have given it much thought," he added.

Toh's pledge has undoubtedly given the BN campaign a headache, especially when he was an ex-colleague of Umno candidate Arif Shah Omar Shah in the Penang state assembly.

The outspoken Gerakan leader had expressed his support after visiting a PKR election campaign office yesterday.

anwar ibrahim seberang jaya market permatang pauh by election visit 180808 03 "I feel if Anwar (is elected to) Parliament, the voice of the opposition will be stronger and the chances of strengthening democracy and widening the democratic space will be better.

"For these reasons, I support him," he said, adding that Anwar has been "very consistent and courageous" in articulating a new Malaysian agenda.

However, he refrained from commenting on his BN colleague Arif Shah's candidacy.

'Pull out from BN'

Meanwhile, Anwar also commented on Gerakan Perak's proposal for the party to pull out from the ruling coalition.

anwar ibrahim seberang jaya market permatang pauh by election visit 180808 05He said this was a "very wise proposal" and urged its acting president Dr Koh Tsu Koon "to reflect on that seriously."

"Koh should have the courage to deal with the issue in the interest of the nation. I know him and wish him well. I hope he takes a stand (on the proposal) like our common friend Toh," he said.

Speaking at Gerakan Perak's annual delegates conference in Ipoh yesterday, its Wanita chief Tan Lian Hoe suggested that the party pull out from BN due to Umno's unabated and unabashed racial politics that have hurt the sentiments of non-Malays and non-Muslims.

Gerakan Perak chief and party vice-president Chan Ko Youn also reportedly concurred with Tan, and urged Perak delegates to raise the 'pull out' agenda at the party's national meeting in October.

anwar ibrahim making thosei market permatang pauh by election visit 180808However, Koh had immediately brushed aside the issue.

During his hour-long visit at the market this morning, Anwar was greeted by hawkers and residents.

He was accompanied by Wan Azizah and other party leaders such as vice-president Dr Lee Boon Chye, Penang state exco Phee Boon Poh, state assemblypersons Sim Tze Tzin (Pantai Jerejak), Chan Ming Kai (Simpang Pulai) and Gan Pei Nee (Rawang).

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