

**Propaganda war in full swing**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Aug 20, 2008**  
**Beh Lih Yi**

The slogans are eerily similiar - PKR's MCPX

'Merdekakan Rakyat' and BN's 'Merdekakan Permatang Pauh'. PKR's slogan launch yesterday was quickly followed by BN's own riposte.

bn website merdekakan permatang pauh 190808BN's slogan - which means 'Independence for Permatang Pauh' - was spotted in its newly set-up official election website by Malaysiakini last night. PKR's however means 'Independence for the people'.

It's indeterminable if this is a coincidence or quick thinking by BN, as their version appeared few short hours after the PKR slogan launch.

If it is the former, it's not a first.

BN candidate Arif Shah Omar Shah has said earlier that he will adopt the Mandarin saying of 'we are one big family' - in contrast to his opponent PKR's Anwar Ibrahim's popular 'we are a family'.

The BN man leveraged on his Mandarin and Hokkien fluency - and wrote the phrase in Chinese calligraphy in a media session after his candidacy was announced last week.

It was reminiscent of Anwar's own exhibition of skill a decade ago - as deputy prime minister - writing 'wo men dou shi ji jia ren' in Chinese script. He used it to emphasise his fair treatment of all communities - an attempt to increase his Chinese support base.

### **Past lessons?**

anwar ibrahim permatang pauh by election campaign 190808Earlier yesterday, Anwar launched the PKR election slogan in Seberang Jaya - and chose to explain as someone asked him why an independence slogan after 50 years of independence.

"I said independence is not for ministers or son-in-laws, it should be for the people," he had said.

The BN slogan - whilst similar sounding - asks voters to liberate Permatang Pauh from PKR's and indeed the Anwar family's stranglehold.

Anwar's consecutive terms as MP since 1982 was continued by his wife Dr Wan Azizah Wan during his incarceration - and she vacated her seat last month with the confidence her husband will accede the parliamentary seat.

BN's election website has various articles rebutting the PKR candidate's strategy, in addition to information about the ruling coalition's campaign.

It features prominently audio excerpts of two former close allies of Anwar - Ezam Mohd Nor and KS Nallakaruppan who are campaigning for the BN.

wanita umno with leaders event najib 050808 03There is a link to its official blog which lists the campaign schedules of the coalition's top guns - primarily Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak who is overall campaign leader.

Najib's calendar interestingly includes three cheque handover ceremonies to local mosques in the coming four days - extra to the other goodies already announced.

BN looks to have learnt from the general election in March and are now battling PKR, online.

In the aftermath of the drubbing the BN received in the March 8 general election, Prime Minister and BN chairperson Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had said that it was the coalition's "biggest mistake" to ignore the cyber-campaigning.

Still PKR lunged ahead in the online battle with the launch of the website 'From Permatang Pauh to Putrajaya' days before nomination day.

### **Candidate access**

anwar pasar malam walkabout 200808 04While BN has made strides with the uploading of BN leaders' campaign schedule in its website, however the candidate's schedule has been hard to come by.

Campaign workers have grown frustrated by its absence.

Some are complaining that they are unable to inform the media of their bosses' - BN leaders - schedule because they have to coordinate with the actual candidate's schedule.

At the PKR camp end this is not the case, as Anwar's full-day schedule is available to the media a day in advance.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/88146>