

Toh boost for Anwar
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Anwar Ibrahim's march back into Parliament received a huge boost today with the endorsement of the highly respected Dr Toh Kin Woon.
MCPX

Toh, who had just quit Gerakan on Monday, backed PKR for the Permatang Pauh seat - more importantly giving his thumbs up to their agenda more than their candidate.

permatang pauh 200808 toh kin woonAlthough, Toh hopes that Anwar will return to Parliament to strengthen the opposition's voice, it was the party's struggles which have impressed him the most.

"I'm not here to support Anwar as an individual but I'm here because I back his programme. His agenda, which emphasises good governance, transparency, is against corruption and is not based on race is something that I agree with.

"This by-election is important (and I hope that he wins with a huge majority) because Anwar will be able to lead an even stronger voice in Parliament in the war against corruption and excesses," Toh explained.

That, he said, is also the wish of all Malaysians regardless of race.

Toh told the crowd that he was recently in Singapore for a conference and presented a paper comparing the New Economic Policy and Malaysian Economic Agenda.

"There is nothing inherently wrong with the ideals behind the NEP. But there is now corruption within the system. On the other hand, MEA is aimed at correcting the same imbalances while curbing excesses.

"And that is what I find attractive," he added.

Furthermore, MEA will also try to reduce the gap between the rich and the growing lower income groups, said Toh.

After explaining his stand on the matter, Toh received a huge round of applause from the predominantly Chinese listeners.

Not an act of betrayal

When asked, Toh disagreed that he being with Anwar was an act of betrayal to his former party.

"First and foremost, I've already resigned from Gerakan and I'm no more a member. Two, when people talk about loyalty what do they mean?

anwar pasar malam walkabout 200808 04"The agenda put forward by Anwar is something which Gerakan has always wanted to do. So by supporting Anwar, I'm in a sense continuing

with the struggles and principles of Gerakan on a different platform and a different approach," he said.

"When you join a political party, it should be the party principles that one should stress on," he added.

The former Gerakan central working committee member again stressed that he has no plans to return to active politics, preferring NGO work instead.

"I will be working in the field of Chinese education NGO work and have just secured a research fellowship with the Ateneo De Manila University in the Philippines and another university in Kyoto till next August.

"I'm also working on a paper entitled How governance affects social situations in a country" said the 64-year-old politician.

permatang pauh 200808 tan yee kewIn between the 40-minute press conference, Anwar said it was not important for Toh to join the party but PKR will consult him on matters of good governance from time to time.

On whether he would accept an adviser's role in PKR, Toh said he would have to think about it later.

Anwar added that Toh's role in PKR need not be official as long as he can assist in advising the party.

The press conference at PKR's election campaign office in Sama Gagah was also attended by newly-joined and former MCA women's leader Dr Tan Yee Kew (photo) and DAP state assemblyman Phee Boon Poh.