

Gerakan veep : keep it clean
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There should be no form of intimidation, underhand tactics, foul play, threats and bribery in the run-up to the Aug 26 Permatang Pauh by-election, said Gerakan vice-president Dr S Vijayarajam today.
MCPX

Dr S Vijayarajam In a press statement, he said candidates should tell the people what they plan to do for them and not deliver irrelevant, high-level rhetoric, or worse, indulge in character assassination.

Such things, he added, may be good to listen to but does little to advance the lot of the common man.

"Elections, being what they are, have to be addressed objectively, without negative overtones and innuendos.

"If there are issues attached to the polls, such as allegations of sodomy and murder, then let the law take its course as far as such things are concerned.

"Some people tend to predict the outcome of elections but it is best to let the political parties conduct their campaign and allow the voters to decide," he said.

"Anything can happen with people's perceptions. But they have to realise that there seems to be too much pre-occupation with accusations, counter-accusations, court cases and trial by media," he added.

'Make the right choice'

Vijayarajam said the voters of Permatang Pauh have to decide on who can uplift the economy and improve development of their constituency in these trying times.

"Who can give them new schools, clinics, infrastructure, affordable housing and assist them in agricultural activities? These are essential bread-and-butter issues that matter most to them.

"They must choose the candidate whose voice in Parliament will be better heard by the federal authorities," he pointed.

Permatang Pauh by-election candidates Anwar and Arif Shah On that note, the Barisan Nasional politician asked if a firebrand opposition leader, however high-profile, could achieve this, rather than a steady, hard-working local person who has the backing of the central government's machinery?

"There are those who say that such things don't matter any more. 'Don't play the development card'," they cry.

"However, in the light of the world economic situation, including fuel and food price uncertainties, and falling commodity values, a realistic and rational view should be the order of the day," he noted.

The Gerakan leader said one should also look at the states controlled by the opposition and determine if are they doing all that well.

He also pointed out that the business community and international investors remain uneasy over the question of political stability; it is having an effect on commerce.

"Like it or not, to them, stability is directly proportional to a comfortable parliamentary majority by the ruling BN government, in spite of its shortcomings.

"The point was illustrated by a fall in the stock market after the March 8 general election, and its continued lackluster performance, notwithstanding world economic pressures," he said.

"Voters should ponder over this, as things like employment and living standards are at stake. Wisdom, combined with a little common sense, must light the way," he added.

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