

**BN campaign picks up momentum**  
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**Beh Lih Yi**

If last night's turnout at a Barisan Nasional Youth MCPX

ceramah in Permatang Pauh is any indication, the 'underdog' in this contest may have gained some momentum in the by-election after week-long sustained campaign.

The night however started slow for BN. As at 9pm where the ceramah started, only about 200 showed up at the BN Youth main election campaign office along Jalan Kubang Semang.

However the crowd numbered about 500 as first speaker, Umno Youth information chief Azimi Daim took the mike. It later swelled to about 700 and even spilling into the narrow main road, where motorists and passers-by stopped to follow the speeches.

The ceramah, featuring Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaluddin and star speakers ex-PM leaders Ezam Mohd Nor with KS Nallakaruppan, was considerably the biggest BN rally so far, crowd-wise.

In contrast, a day earlier, there were only about 100 people at a ceramah attended by BN Sabah top guns, which included chief minister Musa Aman at a Malay village, according to reporters who covered the event.

The PKR, on the other hand, has consistently attracted hundreds to thousands of spectators every night. Their star of PKR ceramah is inevitably its candidate Anwar Ibrahim, who attends at least three such talks on a daily basis.

### **Khairy's 'gentleman's pact' with Anwar**

As the BN's crowd grew at last night's ceramah, the Umno leaders also stepped up their attacks on rival Anwar and took more potshots on his bid to win the seat to become prime minister.

khairy jamaluddin umno bn permatang pauh by election campaign 210808 09Leading the charge was Khairy again, who have earlier said BN was on a mission to "bury" Anwar's political career in Permatang Pauh to "save" the country from the PKR supremo. Calling it a "gentleman's pact", Khairy placed his Umno Youth deputy chief post as his bet that should Anwar successfully take over the federal power on Sept 16 and become the prime minister, he will quit his Umno post.

"Otherwise, Anwar should step down as the PKR de facto leader," challenged Khairy, who is also the Rembau MP, to the applause from supporters, many of whom were youngsters and women.

Khairy has yet to disclose his plan in the upcoming Umno polls. However, it is widely believed that he will not defend his current No 2 post and will seek to contest the Youth chief post.

He used the latest announcement of the reduction in fuel prices by Prime Minister Abdullah

Ahmad Badawi to criticise Anwar's pledge to lower fuel prices once the latter comes into power.

"No need to wait for Anwar, the prime minister has already announced the reduction in fuel prices today. What else that Anwar wants? A lower price?" he questioned.

Branding Anwar as the "hypocrite of the highest order", Khairy also claimed he was privy to information and alleged discussion between Anwar and the United States.

"The first thing that he will do if he comes into power is not lowering fuel prices but to sign the Free Trade Agreement deal with the US," he claimed, adding that Anwar was also allegedly agreeable to a US deal to operate an airbase in the country.

Halfway through his speech, a minor commotion broke out when Anwar's entourage passed by the ceramah venue and believed to have slowed down the car to see the BN's ceramah.

The BN supporters made catcalls and shouted 'sumpah, sumpah', in urging Anwar to make a religious oath that he has not sodomised ex-aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

"I feel geli (uncomfortable) as he waves at me. Sorry, it's no entry here," quipped Khairy.

### **Nalla: He is a good actor**

Another star speaker Nallakaruppan joined in the fray later to lash out at Anwar.

The former tennis buddy of Anwar, who quit PKR after a fallout with the PKR supremo, said his former ally was a "good actor" and a man "who never keep his word and has no principle".

ezam nallakaruppan seberang jaya penang umno event 130808 01 "If he becomes prime minister, everyone won't look forward, but will look 'back'," he made the sexual innuendo repeatedly during his speech, delivered in Bahasa Malaysia.

He claimed to have in possession of five tapes about Anwar, which he keeps for safekeeping overseas, but he refused to elaborate on the content when asked by reporters later.

Nallakaruppan also alleged that he was warned by Anwar in order not to campaign for BN in Permatang Pauh and he continued to receive SMSes from unknown individuals threatening him.

"They threatened to kill me (if I campaign here). Come here and kill me now," he challenged, adding that he has lodged five police reports so far over the matter.

Another Anwar's former close ally Ezam also spoke against Anwar.

Before the ceramah began last night, the organiser played the video clip of Saiful's swearing in the mosque - which has almost become a norm in every BN gatherings.

BN continues to highlight the controversy, which may sway away some elderly Malay votes from PKR. Malays make 69.4 percent of the total voters here.

The BN campaign is expected to focus on the Malay heartlands in the final three days, which it has not been able to gain much inroads so far.

Allegations were rife that BN was not able to do so as PKR has placed its workers to keep guard on the Malay villages.

Umno Youth's Azimi, when asked on the matter last night, said he believed that the incidents were not rampant. He however said he need to get more details before commenting further on it.

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