

Arif : I'll win with 500 to 5,000 majority
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Beh Lih Yi

With less than 48 hours to go before Permatang Pauh voters cast their vote, BN candidate Arif Shah Omar Shah has a bold prediction.
MCPX

He said he could win the seat with an estimated majority of between 500 and 5,000 votes.

arif shah omar shah pc 040808 01His confidence of capturing the hotly contested seat was due to the 'silent support' from PAS voters.

"I can see that BN is winning already. People want changes because the BN government has shown it is sensitive to the dissatisfaction of the people and action has been taken to give them the confidence (that problems will be solved)," he told a press conference at his house in Seberang Jaya this morning.

The BN candidate said his confidence came from an intelligence report which was based on interviews, house-to-house visits and as well as BN's "physical assessment".

"The fence-sitters are showing their support. We can't steal many votes from the 'black' areas (staunch PKR supporters) but I have a feeling that the PAS supporters will give their votes to BN quietly."

umno bn pak lah liow tiong lai event permatang pauh by election 240808 05"In the recent PAS general assembly, there were a lot of issues (raised which showed) their internal dissatisfaction towards Pakatan (Rakyat). This will translate into votes for me and they (the voters) know all the while that I'm not a racist, I treat everyone as my friend," he said.

He also promised that once elected as MP, he will share his constituency's allocation with Permatang Pasir, which is held by the sole PAS state assemblyperson in Penang, Mohd Hamdan Abdul Rahman.

Arif Shah stressed that he enjoyed "good relationship" with Hamdan, who is his peer in the Penang state legislative assembly.

'My wife is a naughty girl'

The Permatang Pauh parliamentary constituency houses three state seats - Permatang Pasir (PAS), Penanti (PKR) and Seberang Jaya (Umno), where Arif Shah has represented for two terms.

permatang pauh 230808 poster man 2The BN man faces PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim and Akim president Hanafi Hamat in a three-cornered fight. Polling is on Tuesday.

According to Arif Shah, Permatang Pasir is the major 'black' area, followed by Penanti.

Asked on the possibility of Hanafi taking votes of PAS supporters away from Anwar, Arif Shah said that would be something positive for him.

The BN candidate said he will cast his vote at the Sekolah Seberang Jaya (II) on polling day at exactly 8am, which he believed is an 'auspicious' time.

Clad in a blue BN shirt, Arif Shah appeared slightly fatigued during the press conference after eight days of non-stop campaigning but he entertained all questions from journalists passionately.

permatang pauh 2008 results for state and state seats 140808 According to him, he had only sleep for two to three hours a day since nomination day last Saturday.

Despite the hectic schedule, Arif Shah said he wakes up every morning to perform his subuh prayer.

"My wife is a naughty girl. She would wake me up at 6.30am. I'd thought she was waking me up for something else, but my wife said, 'you need to go for prayers'. That somehow forced me to wake up (early)," he quipped.

There are 58,459 eligible voters in Permatang Pauh.

To ensure a higher voter turnout on the polling day, which is a working day, the Pakatan-led Penang state government has today declared a special holiday for Aug 26.

The seat was vacated by PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to pave the way for her husband Anwar to return to Parliament after a 10-year hiatus since his sacking from the government.

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