

Umno Puteri's motto: Have bike, will travel
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Umno Puteri has embarked on a novel idea to embark on their campaign in Bukit Gantang - cycling from one neighbourhood to another to reach out to voters.

Tualang Sekah state assemblyperson Nolee Ashilin who led the Puteri campaign of about 100 members on their round yesterday said campaigning on bicycles should be taken up again after it was deemed an 'outdated' style of campaign.

Speaking to Malaysiakini during her campaign in Taman Paloh, Changkat Jering yesterday afternoon, Nolee said cycling campaigns seemed to have a magic touch as many voters welcomed them with open arms.

"So far, we have visited 100 houses cycling and received warm welcome. Many happily opened their doors to invite us into their homes," she said happily.

The feedback they received was "satisfying" although some voters were still "doubtful" of the BN.

"We spent around 10 minutes in each house chit-chatting just about anything. So far, the responses have been positive and encouraging," said Nolee, who was clad in pink Puteri Umno uniform - a colour that is distinguishable even from afar.

Nolee pointed out that cycling is a different and a better approach compared to "riding motorcycles to avoid being linked to the Mat Rempit menace".

"Through this, we can also promote cycling among the young people as a healthy activity. In fact, we received such good feedback over the past three days over our cycling campaign," she said.

"One hundred bicycles were sponsored by Kampar Umno division and they will be donated to needy students and others a day before the by-election on March 7 when we have to halt all campaigning."

Candidate is not an issue

Nolee is upbeat on the chances of the Barisan candidate, Kampar-born Ismail Saffian.

Putting asides the issue of candidate not 'turun padang' or meeting the constituents, the Puteri leader said it was a non-issue as Ismail has been working very hard to reach as many areas as possible.

But she conceded that some of the anti-BN sentiments were high due primarily to the "national factor".

"They have been losing faith in the BN leadership since the 2008 general election. Now we need to fix our image in order to restore people's confidence in us," said Nolee.

Not only that, she added, BN in particular needed to work hard especially in "grey and black areas in Trong and Kuala Sepetang" where most Malay voters are not with the BN.

However, Nolee was optimistic that with the help from BN component parties MCA and Gerakan, they would be able to swing the support of some of the Pakatan votes towards the BN.

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