

Ongkili drums up support for BN candidate Tsen
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SANDAKAN - Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) deputy president Dr Maximus Ongkili said the party together with other Barisan Nasional component parties would fight for every vote in the Batu Sapi by-election as the campaigning entered its third day.

"We are going all out to woo voters in Batu Sapi. A vote for the BN will be a vote for more development," he said.

Ongkili said retaining BN and PBS for the Batu Sapi seat would ensure that the constituents reaped the benefits from the government's new development and reform initiatives.

In drumming up support for BN, he said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's administration was implementing sincere measures to improve the people's livelihood and welfare, such as through its National Key Results Area, National Key Economic Areas and the New Economic Model.

"Sabah and Sarawak had special focus in these programmes, which could only be realised if the initiatives were fully supported by the people," he told *Bernama*, here.

Ongkili said the government was working very hard to identify what needed to be done not only to raise the country's economic development but also ensure ordinary people gained in terms of their socio-economic welfare, as defined by the NKRA measures.

"Now is the time for us to progress forward and not to move backward. Thus, BN and PBS hope the voters of Batu Sapi bear this in mind when casting their votes on Nov 4.

"Sandakan today in all its development is all because of BN and we ask what the Opposition has done for Sandakan.

"The SAPP (Sabah Progressive Party) and PKR (Parti Keadilan Rakyat) candidates only want to win this one seat for their own personal gain. They cannot help the people because they do not have back up from the state and federal government.

"PBS as a partner in the ruling coalition is the best channel for this. For us, it is to continue our struggle for the people of Batu Sapi," said Ongkili, who is PBS Director of Operations for Polling Districts.

He said the BN candidate from PBS, Linda Tsen was the best choice for BN and she also had a clean record.

"A UK (United Kingdom) graduate, Tsen is a loving mother to four children and would add to the women's representation in Parliament. She is a strong woman who has undertaken the responsibility to continue the unfinished business of the Government in Batu Sapi by continuing with the good work of her late husband.

"She is committed to Sandakan which is her hometown, unlike the SAPP and PKR candidates," he said.

Ongkili said political experience was not an issue for Tsen, who is PBS Wanita vice-chief as "she is well-versed on the needs of the people of Sandakan".

"Besides that, she has the support of the BN leadership and PBS president (Joseph Pairin Kitingan) and supreme council members to guide her," he added.

Touching on the issues being raised by the opposition, he said the fact that Chinese voters made up only 38 percent of voters there was not an issue as PBS was a multi-racial party.

Not to be outdone, the opposition parties went to every corner of Batu Sapi to fish for votes. As expected, SAPP continued to harp on the problems affecting the state such as illegal immigrants and the slow implementation of "Borneonisation" (the appointment of locals as heads) in the various Federal departments and agencies in the state to convince the Batu Sapi voters to vote for the local-based party while PKR highlighted numerous local issues including lack of development in the area.

Tsen is involved in a three-cornered fight against SAPP president Yong Teck Lee, who is a former Sabah chief minister, and PKR Tuaran Chief and prominent lawyer Ansari Abdullah in the by-election.

The Batu Sapi parliamentary seat fell vacant following the death of its incumbent and two-term MP, Datuk Edmund Chong, following an accident on Oct 9.

In the March 2008 general election, Datuk Edmund Chong (BN) polled 9,479 votes while Dr Chung Kong Wing (Independent) had 5,771 votes. Chong won with a 3,708-vote majority. - Bernama

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