

**The kind of leaders we need**  
**New Straits Times**  
**December 3, 2011**

KUALA LUMPUR: Umno leaders must realise that they are no longer living in an era where people flocked just to get a glimpse of them.

The people now wanted to assess their leaders from close and they appreciated those who listened to them, said Puteri Umno representative Wan Salwati Abdullah.

"But, jangan lah salam guna hujung jari saja, tengoklah muka mereka, tanya keadaan mereka (do not shake the people's hands insincerely, only using your fingertips. Look at their face and ask how they are doing).

"We must be concerned of the well-being of the people and display our sincerity and not be pretentious," said Wan Salwati when debating the motion of thanks on the party president's speech at the Umno general assembly yesterday.

Delivering a fiery speech in a very high pitched tone, Wan Salwati satirically took several "shots" at party leaders, much to the amusement of delegates who welcomed her boldness with thunderous applause.

"The time has changed, we are no longer living in an era where people flock just to get a glimpse of their leaders. Now the people want to assess their leaders from up close -- they appreciate leaders who listen to them, shake their hands.

"Previously, it has been an issue that some Umno leaders were seen as unfriendly when meeting people on the ground.

"The time when leaders can just brush off and insult the young, when they disagree or are not interested in our party, is already in the past. Do not only look at their mistakes, understand them. This is what they want to see in us today."

She said the Election Commission statistics showed that there were 5,011,797 young voters from a total of 12,497,877. This does not include about 3,140,603 youths above the age of 21 who have yet to register.

"If all of them were to register and vote in the next general election, they would make up to 52 per cent of total voters. It is very clear that they will be the determining power of the future administration."

During her long speech, Wan Salwati at several times caused other delegates to burst into laughter, especially when she got away with extra time with her 'charm'.

"Ayahanda, we are your daughters... the next generation of leaders. Give me some more time ya?"

She was given extra time thrice, and on the third occasion, permanent chairman Datuk Badruddin Amiruldin told her that she should finish her speech quickly.

"See... now you are taking my time," she said, when Badruddin softly replied "aik... tak bagi masa salah, bagi pun kena... (no matter whether I give extra time or not, I am still blamed).

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