

PKR to press on with electoral roadshow despite attack on bus
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By Ida Lim

PETALING JAYA, Sept 1 — PKR said today it will continue its “Jelajah Merdeka Rakyat” roadshow after its bus — customised for the pre-election tour — was damaged on its maiden journey in a pre-dawn attack by unidentified hooligans in Kelantan.

The urban-based multiracial opposition party suggested that the assault may be politically-motivated as part of an attempt to cripple its efforts to win over the crucial Malay votes ahead of national polls due soon.

The party’s top leaders including president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and her husband, Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, were part of the entourage yesterday heading into the rural Malay heartland in four states that have long been regarded as the fortresses of its political foe Umno, the grand old Malay party that has been the lynchpin of the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition.

“Keadilan will continue Jelajah Merdeka Rakyat as planned and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s group will tour Perak, Perlis and Kelantan until Sunday,” PKR deputy president Azmin Ali told reporters today.

The pre-dawn attack took place at about 4.20am while the bus was parked outside the Siti Khatijah market in PAS-ruled Kota Baru.

Unknown assailants pelted the bus with stones, which resulted in the front windscreen being cracked on the driver’s side. The assailants also splashed red paint against the windscreen, said Azmin.

“The culture of thugs and threats has become the practice and main weapon of [our] enemies ... to block the advance of Keadilan and Pakatan Rakyat (PR),” the Gombak MP said, referring to the opposition bloc the party formed with allies PAS and DAP after their unprecedented sweep of 82 federal seats in Election 2008.

“I am confident that police investigations will not produce any stern action against the criminals involved.”

PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli then said the Kota Baru police have released the bus after investigations, and it will now continue on to Grik, Perak where it will be met by the entourage.

PKR had kicked off its tour yesterday morning.

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