

Pakatan targets Dr M's family in GE13 campaign
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By Mohd Farhan Darwis

JOHOR BARU, April 3 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) replied to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's attacks on its leaders, linking his son Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir's riches to cronyism in a ceramah here last night as the battle heats up for the Umno bastion.

The country's longest-serving prime minister had told Johor folk to end the political careers of PR leaders, especially DAP advisor Lim Kit Siang who is contesting in Gelang Patah here in Election 2013. Kit Siang is heading the opposition pact's assault of Johor in the general election that will be called any day now.

"The Petronas advisor is Dr Mahathir; Dr Mahathir's son, Mokhzani Mahathir, is among the richest people in Malaysia. Does he think his son is the only Malay around?" PKR secretary-general Datuk Saifuddin Nasution Ismail told some 2,000 people at Kampung Datuk Sulaiman Menteri in the historic Kampung Melayu Majidee area here.

This is the second ceramah by top PR leaders in as many weeks in Kampung Melayu Majidee, reflecting their efforts to beat the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN), after their successes of winning Selangor and Penang in Election 2008.

"Why does Dr Mahathir hate Anwar, Lim Kit Siang and Abdul Hadi? ... because they are the new hope.

"Why is Mahathir angry? This isn't his time anymore, because he knows if we can change, not only Mahathir but even his children are finished," DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said at the same ceramah.

"Dr Mahathir's son is the 13th richest person in Malaysia," said the Penang chief minister, who is also Kit Siang's son.

Mokhzani is part owner and vice-president of Sapura Kencana Petroleum Bhd, an oil-and-gas (O&G) specialist that has been awarded a RM836 million risk production contract by national oil company Petronas Bhd.

With RM11.85 billion in assets, Sapura Kencana is one of the world's top (O&G) service support players by asset base. It has also started venturing into other oil-producing companies such as Kazakhstan.

In his speech on Sunday at a people's housing scheme organised by Pulai Umno chief Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed, Dr Mahathir spoke at length about opposition leaders, including his former deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim whom he said had cheated him by appearing to be pious while in Umno and BN.

He also criticised the other PR leaders, including PAS spiritual leader Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat, saying they refused to "change" by still contesting in elections although they have been in politics for a long time.

Dr Mahathir said BN had changed six prime ministers since ruling the nation from independence in 1957 but PAS and DAP were still being led by the same people and did not

give opportunities to the younger generation and second-liners to take leadership roles.

Meanwhile, Anwar named four candidates for parliamentary seats in Johor last night, including former Army chief Tan Sri Jeneral (B) Md Hashim Husin, for the Johor Baru seat.

The others are former Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM) leader Datuk Idris Jauzi for Batu Pahat, Nor Izwan Mohamad for Muar, while PKR deputy secretary-general Steven Choong will contest in Tebrau.

Anwar also spoke in Masai near here last night, but the Kampung Melayu Majidee ceramah was the biggest event in the middle of the state capital Johor Baru.

His speech was interrupted by singing from a BN event held just 50 metres away, but he continued on.

* An earlier caption for the accompanying photograph incorrectly identified Datuk Seri Ali Rustam (far left) as Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir. The error is regretted.

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