

Up against Dr M's favourite, Nik Aziz's son banks on Pasir Mas voters' anger
Malaysian Insider
April 26, 2013
By Zurairi AR

ASIR MAS, April 26 — Pitted against local political juggernaut Datuk Ibrahim Ali, PAS's Nik Abduh Nik Abdul Aziz is hoping that Pasir Mas voters will still remember the Perkasa chief's shifting allegiance in the last polls and let their anger decide their votes this time.

The PAS Youth wing deputy chief also hopes the message will help distinguish himself from being seen as just the son of the Islamist party's spiritual adviser Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, popularly known as "Tok Guru".

"In Pasir Mas, the mood of the voters is very different compared to other parliamentary seats in Kelantan.

"Most of the voters, PAS supporters especially, are so eager to take back Pasir Mas," Nik Abduh told The Malaysian Insider on the sidelines of his walkabout here yesterday.

Sitting with The Malaysian Insider in a Chinese coffee shop, Nik Abduh explained that Pasir Mas, which had been held by PAS since 1999, was given a shock when Ibrahim declared himself a Barisan Nasional (BN)-friendly independent MP after his win in 2008. Ibrahim had contested under PAS, but had a falling out with the Islamist party.

The stout Malay supremacy group chief, known derisively as "frog" for his party-hopping ways, has joined forces with BN this time as an independent candidate after the coalition's Che Johan Che Pa failed to turn in his nomination forms on Nomination Day.

"What's most important now is to grant the wishes of the Pasir Mas people who are looking for a truthful and trustworthy leader ... The current MP is a treacherous MP," said Nik Abduh.

"Nik Abduh, he's a 'Mat Masjid', so it's a bit hard for him to hang out with 'Mat Lepak' and 'Mat Rempit' ... He's really like a carbon copy of Tok Guru," said a party worker who only wanted to be known as Izzat, referring to Nik Abduh's reserved and quiet demeanour compared to the outspoken Ibrahim.

However, the PAS man made up for his demeanour with his religious expertise, a trait seen desirable by PAS supporters that make up the bulk of Pasir Mas voters. The three state seats under the Pasir Mas federal seat — Tendong, Pengkalan Pasir and Chetok — were all won by PAS in the last polls.

"If he does not win this year, he will still win in 10 more years. Islam will trump all in the end ... Only the crazies and the damned support Umno," said Che Nawi Che Musa, 61, an entrepreneur who reminisced about his earliest memories of Tok Guru when Nik Abduh met him in a barbershop during the walkabout.

"Ibrahim won last time because he was backed by PAS ... This time he cannot be too sure, he's running against Tok Guru's son," said trishaw rider Leman Daud, 78, as he smoked a rolled cigarette in his toothless mouth.

To counter Nik Abduh's piety, Ibrahim had taken a page out of the playbook of his mentor

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and pledged an upgrade to the area's infrastructure that he claimed has been neglected under PAS rule.

He spoke about kickstarting the local tourism industry in Pasir Mas by pitching a Madame Tussauds-like museum for the town. Madame Tussauds is one of the major tourist attractions in London, displaying lifelike wax statues of famous celebrities and figures.

As he put on his sunglasses to leave, Nik Abduh joked that it would benefit both PAS and BN if he wins against Ibrahim.

"If Tok Him happens to win, Umno will never ever get to put its candidate for Pasir Mas," he said, referring to Ibrahim by his nickname.

"We should bury Tok Him in defeat first, then we can both have a proper fight," he added, smiling.

Newcomer Nik Abduh leads a group of 18 fresh faces put up by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) in the Malay heartland of Kelantan.

He faces Ibrahim to win the hearts and minds of 72,122 registered voters in Pasir Mas, 96 per cent of whom are Malays. Ibrahim won by a majority of 8,991 votes in 2008, but lost to PAS's Ismail Noh in 2004 when he ran as an independent.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/up-against-dr-ms-favourite-nik-aziz-son-banks-on-pasir-mas-voters-anger/>