

## **Umno fears 'selfless' Wan Azizah**

**Free Malaysia Today**

**11 March 2014**

**Oleh Luke Rintod**

KOTA KINABALU: Ordinary Sabahans from both sides of the political divides are expecting the PKR candidate in the Kajang by-election to reap a huge harvest as a result of public sympathy towards its de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim.

They said now that Anwar has been barred from contesting, by virtue of the court conviction, Selangor voters in Kajang would be even more inclined to side with the "victims" than with the perceived "perpetrators" of injustice.

"Not only has public sympathy risen for Anwar and PKR after the ruling of the court of appeal but hatred against the Umno-led ruling executive has also risen.

"Many expected this to translate into unassailable votes bank for the PKR candidate," said a Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) member. PBS is a Sabah Barisan Nasional coalition partner.

She said the court conviction on Anwar is counter-productive against BN.

"I might be wrong but we in PBS had also experienced the same thing before, and each time we became victims of the system, the voters came to our side," she said referring to PBS own tumultuous years under constant BN harassment when it was outside BN.

An Umno stalwart who requested anonymity told FMT that while he felt no sympathy for Anwar and PKR, he feared Kajang voters especially the Malays would be taken in by Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail's selfless sacrifice to stand in for her husband once again.

Wan Azizah had similarly done so in Permatang Pauh following Anwar's imprisonment in 1998 on the first sodomy charge.

"We fear the Malays would be swayed by emotions and thus vote for PKR.

"Chew Mei Fun, the named MCA candidate, is already facing uphill task to convince the Chinese voters in Kajang.

"We are definitely worried of a reduced votes for BN," he said claiming he was in Kajang just days ago and would be going there again later.

### **'Let people judge the judges'**

Sabah PKR state deputy secretary, Abdul Rahman Yakub, when contacted meanwhile said he expected PKR to get a bigger majority especially if its a straight fight.

"We want to win with the biggest majority. So far it is good but tomorrow's (today) nomination would be an early yardstick of how the people in Kajang support us," he said adding "let the

people judge the judges..” in reference to the latest court conviction on Anwar.

On Friday, the Court of Appeal reversed an acquittal made by the High Court in 2012, and found Anwar guilty of sodomising Saiful Bukhari Azlan in 2008.

The court also sentenced Anwar to a five year jail time but allowed a stay in execution.

The verdict disqualified Anwar from contesting in the Kajang by-election.

Many had perceived, either wrongly or rightly, the court of appeal’s lightning ruling on the public prosecutor’s appeal against Anwar’s earlier acquittal of a sodomy case, as part of a bigger conspiracy to thwart his effort to bolster his campaign to overthrow the Umno-led BN which had been under increasing criticism both from outside and within BN.

Anwar’s only hope now lies in his appeal to the Federal Court. He filed his appeal yesterday. If the federal court upholds the conviction then Anwar, who is Permatang Pauh MP, will also have to quit this seat.

Polling for the Kajang by-election is on March 23. Today is nomination day.

Former federal minister, Zaid Ibrahim, who had said he would stand against Anwar, retracted his intention two days ago, saying he would now stay away as the position of Selangor Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim is no longer under threat from Anwar.

On March 6 a popular local dangdut singer, Herman Tino, who had earlier indicated his intention to stand as an independent candidate, withdrew saying he did not want to be accused of splitting votes and receiving payments.

Copyright © 2013 – Free Malaysia Today

Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2014/03/11/umno-fears-selfless-wan-azizah/>