

I'm a grandma, so what, says Wan Azizah
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By Ista Kyra Sharmugam

PKR president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said her age is not an issue in the Permatang Pauh by-election as her critics harp on her grandmother status against her younger Barisan Nasional opponent.

"They can call me a grandmother, so what, I am a proud grandmother," said the 63-year-old to loud applause from the crowd at a fundraiser dinner in Seberang Jaya yesterday.

The PKR candidate was moved to tears when her grandchildren went up on stage to present her with a bouquet of flowers.

She hugged and kissed them as they posed for photographs, before telling the crowd that seeing her grandchildren was a treat as she has not spent time with them since she began campaigning for the Permatang Pauh by-election.

"Seeing them now I am reminded that I am in this struggle for their future," she said.

Dr Wan Azizah said she was sad that her husband, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the former Permatang Pauh MP, was in jail but said it spurred her to continue his struggle and honour his sacrifice.

She spoke of her husband's sodomy conviction and subsequent jailing.

"They took him away in cars with tinted glasses and there were five vehicles so we did not know which one he was in.

"Still he told me, 'love is strong, I'll be okay, you carry on the fight'."

One of her daughters, Nurul Iman Anwar, who was seated at a table near the stage, was crying at this point.

Before closing her speech Dr Wan Azizah urged the people to vote for her in the May 7 polls, telling them to "fight for what is right".

"Reject the injustice and GST.

"I have children and they have children. I have been through ups and downs but I have done no wrong and I wash my own hair," she said, in an apparent dig at the prime minister's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, who once said that she had to fork out RM1,200 to dye her hair at home.

"Please undi Wan jie," she said, using the Mandarin translation of her nickname "Kak Wan".

Some 52% of the 71,890 registered voters in Permatang Pauh are women.

The Pakatan Rakyat campaign has attempted to ride on this advantage as their candidate, Dr Wan Azizah, is the only female in the four-cornered contest for the parliamentary seat.

Her challengers are Barisan Nasional newcomer, Suhaimi Sabudin, 43, a construction company managing director from Guar Perahu, Permatang Pauh; independent candidate Salleh Isahak, 53; and Azman Shah Othman from Parti Rakyat Malaysia. – May 6, 2015.

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