Inter-Party Competition And Electoral Campaigning
In Rural Malaysia:
The Pendang And Anak Bukit By-Elections Of 2002

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Inter-Party Competition And Electoral Campaigning In Rural Malaysia: The Pendang And Anak Bukit By-Elections Of 2002

The Pendang parliamentary and Anak Bukit by-elections for the Kedah state legislative assembly were among the most contentious of by-elections in recent Malaysian politics. Held simultaneously on 18 July 2002, the elections had arisen as a result of the death of the incumbent for both seats, Fadzil Noor. As Fadzil was leader of the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS) and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, the contests had symbolic value as an indicator of the mid-term fortunes of both the ruling Barisan Nasional (National Front) and the Barisan Alternatif (Alternative Front). For the latter, it was a severe test for its continued credibility as an opposition force since the withdrawal of the Chinese-dominated Democratic Action Party (DAP) in late 2001. Being located in the rural heartlands of northern Malaysia, Pendang and Anak Bukit typically represent the impetuous atmosphere of grassroots Malay politics, infused with a strong element of politicised Islamic culture, and pitting the bitter rivals, PAS and the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), in a head-on contest. Based on primary research in Pendang and Anak Bukit during the run-up to the elections, the paper examines the practice of rural democracy by looking at the politics of candidate nomination, the campaign organisation and strategies and the results from the point of view of participant observants and random interviewers.

Introduction

In democratic countries where regular elections are held, by-elections take place in the event of the death or resignation of a member of parliament or an equivalent representative institution. By-elections seldom generate as much interest as general elections. However, their potential significance should not be under-estimated, especially in the context of relatively small democracies such as Malaysia. By-elections have been treated as a mid-term measure of national political temperature – an indicator of the extent of people’s satisfaction towards the present performance of the government. By-elections see the concentration of an enormous amount of resources, from both the government and opposition sides, within a small area in a short space but limited period of time. The relevant constituency receives unprecedented and continuous media attention in the week preceding the by-election. In developing societies, networks of patronage politics and developmentalist politics assert themselves.
to the earnest during by-elections. In Malaysia, by-election results have also been interpreted as harbingers of fundamental change in the national political configuration (Singh and Narayanan 1989).

**Background**

On 23 June, 2002, the president of *Parti Islam SeMalaysia* (PAS – the Islamic Party of Malaysia) and Opposition Leader in Malaysia’s Parliament, Fadzil Mohd. Noor, passed away. His death set the stage for two of the hardest fought by-elections in recent Malaysian politics, namely elections for the parliamentary seat of Pendang and the state legislative assembly (DUN – *Dewan Undangan Negeri*) seat for the Anak Bukit constituency in the northern state of Kedah.¹

In Kedah, acrimonious rivalry between the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) – main partner of the ruling *Barisan Nasional* (BN - National Front) coalition, and the opposition PAS – by now *de facto* leader of the *Barisan Alternatif* (BA - Alternative Coalition), had existed for decades. Fierce political dispute had led to fissures within Kedah’s rural Malay communities, with differing interpretations and observances of Islam between UMNO and PAS being the main divisive issues (Mahadzir bin Mohamad Khir 1980). Nonetheless, the Pendang and Anak Bukit by-elections were additionally significant because for the first time ever, the UMNO-PAS contest was waged at both parliamentary and state levels simultaneously. Moreover, winning or losing in Anak Bukit and Pendang would be regarded as a matter of prestige for the Prime Minister-cum-UMNO President Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, as he had indicated just two days before the death of Fadzil Noor that he would be stepping down as the Prime Minister in October 2003. The by-elections were thus seen as a test for the Prime Minister-designate Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his new team in any post-Mahathir administration. They also served as a test for the Chief minister of Kedah, Syed Razak Syed Zain to restore the two-thirds majority, which by his own admission was lost during the 2000 Lunas state seat by-election because he “*was not fully prepared to face the challenges*” after holding the post for just four months.²
As for the opposition PAS, retaining the prestigious seats, would serve to enhance its credibility as an alternative party to Malay-Muslim voters. It was also believed that if PAS were to win the by-elections, it would be a reiteration of support from the Malay heartland and would serve as an indicator as to how the rural Malay electorate was expected to vote in the next general elections. Moreover, success in the by-elections would serve to boost the morale of PAS’s acting president Abdul Hadi Awang, who was widely expected to steer the party towards a decidedly radical stance in promoting a thoroughly Islamic state and hence, away from an accommodating approach towards the non-Muslim opposition leadership, as had been pioneered by Fadzil Noor.

The BN dubbed its election campaign as *Ops Ambil Balik* (Recovery Operation), emphasising its determination to regain both the seats. As stressed by UMNO vice-president, Najib Razak, the by-elections would be a major test for the BN-UMNO coalition and serve as a gauge as to how the party had fared in restoring its political standing among the voters (*Berita Minggu*, 30 June 2002). By winning the by-elections, the BN leadership hoped to demonstrate that the Malay-Muslim rural voters had returned to UMNO’s fold and at the same time rejected PAS’s campaign for an Islamic state. The by-elections were also seen as an opportunity for Chief minister Syed Razak Syed Zain to assert his leadership in the faction-ridden Kedah UMNO.

On the other hand, a PAS victory would indicate that the voters were supportive of PAS’s initiatives in administering the states of Kelantan and Terengganu according to Islamic precepts, in particular in implementing the *hudud* criminal code as prescribed by Islamic law. More importantly, if PAS were to succeed, it would brighten its expectation of capturing the third target state in its agenda and serve to debunk the popular perception that PAS was merely an east coast phenomenon that flourished on resistance politics (cf. Kershaw 1977). Indeed, PAS had been making significant in-roads into Kedah since the 1999 elections, when it not only retained Kelantan, but also captured Terengganu and made a stunning gain of 12 seats in the 36-seat Kedah DUN.
The Constituencies

Anak Bukit is well known as the ‘royal town’ as the palace of the Kedah sultanate is located here. To add to its significance, it was the former place of residence of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad before he became Malaysia’s fourth Prime Minister. The Anak Bukit state legislative seat was one of the three state seats in the Kuala Kedah parliamentary constituency then controlled by PAS. It was also proximate to the Kedah Chief minister’s DUN seat. The constituency is located in the midst of rice-fields, which is now giving way to the urban spread of the state capital, Alor Star, located 8 kilometres away. It has been earmarked as a future administrative capital and as such has seen numerous infrastructural projects such as the RM 58 million road-widening project between the Kepala Batas airport and Anak Bukit.

Given its proximity to the state capital, the constituency has seen a marked change in its land use pattern. The once verdant rice fields have slowly transformed into suburban housing estates and shopping complexes or sold off for mixed development purposes. Nonetheless, 85 percent of its estimated population of about 50,000 remain to be farmers. The rest of the population is made up of factory workers, civil servants and businessmen. Correspondingly, there has been a shift in the job profile of the constituents. In recent years, there has been a shift from the arduous jobs of working in the rice fields to salaried jobs in small businesses, government employment and in factories in the industrial estate of nearby Mergong and in even distant Sungai Petani. Facing job scarcity in the aftermath of the 1997-98 recession, most of the younger members of the constituency preferred to seek employment elsewhere. In terms of voter profile by ethnicity, in 2002, of the 19,399 voters in the Anak Bukit constituency, 87.06 percent were Malay voters, 11.09 percent were Chinese voters and Indians formed 1.49 percent of the electorate. Others, mostly Siamese of Malaysian origin constituted 4.91 percent of the voters. In addition, 51.81 percent of the electorate were women (The Star, 15 July 2002).

The Pendang parliamentary constituency is a thinly populated rural constituency, whose residents have been involved mostly in farming, particularly in
tending rice fields, tapping rubber and operating fruit orchards. The younger generation was largely employed in factories as far as Sungai Petani, Prai and in the Bayan Lepas industrial estates in Penang. In terms of the voter profile by ethnicity, in 2002, of the 53,128 voters, 46,630 or 87.8% were Malays, 3,403 or 6.4% were Chinese, Indians formed 487 or 0.92% of the voters while others, mostly Siamese of Malaysian origin formed 2,608 or 4.91% of the voters. Of this total, women made up 51.32% of voters in Pendang (The Star, 15 July 2002).

In terms of voter profile by age group, 16.19% of voters in Anak Bukit and 15.83% of voters in Pendang were in the 21-30 age group. Those in the range of 31 – 40 years old formed 25% of the voters in Anak Bukit and Pendang. Voters in the 51 and above age range formed 36% of the total number of voters in both Anak Bukit and in Pendang (The Star, 12 July 2002). At the onset of the by-election campaign, it was widely anticipated that the 21-30 age group would be the deciding factor in the election since it was believed that the older voters were more or less set in their voting preferences, mostly in favour of the opposition. By the same token, it was expected that the non-Malay voters who formed about 12% of the voters in both constituencies would favour the BN and thus ensure their success.

The electoral roll gazetted in December 2001 and updated on 5 July 2002 was to be used for the by-elections. The updated roll listed 53,128 voters for Pendang, including 170 postal voters, and 19,300 registered voters for Anak Bukit, including 20 postal voters. Indeed the number listed was lower than in an earlier list. As mentioned by the Election Commission Chairman Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman, “The number of voters has changed drastically and is lower than the one gazetted earlier. This is because between December and June 28, we removed 1,173 people who have since died from the electoral roll in Pendang and 401 from Anak Bukit” (The Star, 30 June 2002).

The Politics of Candidate Nomination

The nomination date for the by-elections was set for 10 July 2002. Within the BN, and particularly within UMNO, there was intense lobbying for nominations for both the
seats, reflecting the highly competitive nature of UMNO politics vis-à-vis the selection of candidates. Although in recent years many talented UMNO leaders have emerged at the grassroots level, it was often a problem identifying a suitable candidate to contest a by-election due to factional infighting and powers wielded by influential personalities at the divisional level of UMNO’s organisational structure. In essence, any individual who seeks to be nominated needs first to be able to exert influence and power at the divisional level (which corresponds to a parliamentary constituency) of UMNO. Evidently, he must be the head of the division, or hold some other executive post at the division and state level of UMNO’s leadership. Additionally, a prospective candidate needs to have the right connections and if influential enough, he may be able to bypass the divisional level party nomination mechanism and directly seek support of both the state level UMNO leadership and/or the national UMNO leadership. As the Prime Minister had lamented “BN and UMNO supporters had not voted in the past because of the candidate chosen to represent them,” (The Star, 6 July 2002) indicating that the candidate was doubtful of getting support and in a worse case scenario, may have even been sabotaged.

Initially, there were five contenders for the Anak Bukit DUN seat representing three factions within the state UMNO. The three factions were broadly clustered around former and current Chief ministers of the state. Arguably, the most important faction was that of the present Chief minister Syed Razak Syed Zain. The second most important influential faction was that of Osman Aroff, the Chief minister from 1984-1995. The third albeit least influential of the factions was that of the one term Chief minister, Sanusi Junid (1995-1999).

The early list of nominees for the Anak Bukit DUN seat apparently enumerated hopeful politicians representing the various factions within the state UMNO. In the initial stages, it appeared that candidates aligned to the Chief minister Syed Razak Syed Zain were most likely to be named. One of them was Hashim Yahya, 40, a lawyer, and the incumbent Divisional Secretary of the Kuala Kedah Parliamentary constituency. He was an early favourite due to his closeness to the Chief minister and was even touted as
a potential candidate for the Pendang parliamentary seat. The second person on the factional list of the Chief minister was Abdul Mutalib Harun, a businessman heading the Anak Bukit UMNO Youth. He had been earmarked to take over the state UMNO Youth leadership. The third candidate, also a member of the Chief Minster’s faction, was Syed Azman Syed Yahya – the Deputy Anak Bukit UMNO Youth chief. However, all these candidates were deemed to lack the experience to take on PAS. As a result, Abdullah Hasnan Kamaruddin, who in 1995 won the seat but lost it to Fadzil Noor in 1999, was bandied around as the likely candidate. When the UMNO nominee list was further wilted down in the last few days before nomination, there was seemingly intense tussle, maneuvering and lobbying between the two front runners, Zakaria Said and Hashim Yahya, both at the local state level and at the national UMNO level.

In the end, Zakaria Said, 58, regarded as a has-been of Kedah UMNO politics was nominated because he was believed to have the mettle to face up to PAS. Yet, Zakaria’s remarkable comeback and the listing of his name in the final list of candidates would not have been possible but for the intense lobbying by his patron Osman Aroff, a close friend of Dr. Mahathir. The losing candidates - Hashim, Abdullah and others, though embittered, pledged their support for Zakaria.

Unlike the intense lobbying for the state seat of Anak Bukit, the nomination procedure for the Pendang parliamentary seat was quite straightforward. Indeed, by 24 June 2002, Othman Abdul was asked to activate the election campaign machinery for the parliamentary election (The Star, 27 June 2002; The Star, 2 July 2002). He was obviously the front runner given his impressive record during his tenure as the Member of Parliament for Pendang from 1986 until 1999, when he lost to Fadzil Noor. Moreover, he was able to overcome his differences with Md. Rozai Sapian, the DUN member for Sungai Tiang, whose support was crucial to ensure victory in the by-election.

On the other hand, the process of nomination for the DUN and Parliamentary seats in PAS was rather uneventful since it relied on its candidate bank. In cases of by-elections, the local PAS leadership, in this case headed by the Kedah PAS state by-election director Azizan Abdul Razak, would identify the candidates “with a chance to
win and are up to the mark’ (The Star, 2 July 2002). Thus, in the early stages, it was announced that the party had identified four nominees, including Fadzil Noor’s son Dr. Ammar Fadzil, for the Anak Bukit state seat and six nominees for the Pendang parliamentary seat (The Star, 2 July 2002). Just days before nomination day, the Anak Bukit list was further narrowed down to three names: Haris Awang - the state youth chief, the national deputy Dewan Ulama chief Nik Mat Yusof and Amiruddin Hamzah, an engineering consultant. In Pendang, the list was wilted down to two nominees, Dr. Hatta Ramli, the erstwhile political secretary of the late Fadzil Noor, and Dr. Mohd. Hayati Othman. On nomination day, the candidates selected were Amiruddin Hamzah and Dr. Mohd. Hayati.

The Campaign Organisation and Strategies

The campaign for the Anak Bukit-Pendang by-elections began formally on 10 July 2002 - the nomination day. However, since the day of Fadzil Noor’s demise, both BN-UMNO and PAS had geared up the campaign machinery for the by-elections. In particular, the Prime Minister and his cabinet members were active in making various press statements exhorting the voters to return to BN since it was the only party that could guarantee continuous development. PAS and KEADILAN, on the other hand, undoubtedly capitalised on the sympathy factor for Fadzil Noor and held special prayers for him well before nomination day and during the course of the campaign in the two constituencies, especially before the start of political meetings or ceramahs. More importantly, the campaigners depicted him as a humble leader who left no money or property, but a legacy for those who wanted to see reforms in Malaysia” (http://www.harakahdaily.net/article.php?sid=1961 accessed 15 July 2002). They insisted that UMNO was disrespectful towards the late leader by choosing to rush into holding elections when the PAS leaders were still observing a period of mourning. Moreover, they attempted to show that the Sultan of Kedah was sympathetic towards and supportive of Fadzil Noor (New Straits Times, 15 July 2002).
The election was clearly a contest between the BN-UMNO and the PAS-BA coalition, as such it would be pertinent at this juncture to look at the respective election campaign strategies of the two contestants as this would lend some explanation to the success or failure of the respective parties in the polls.

**The BN Campaign**

Generally with the approach of an election, the local branches of a party undergo a remarkable transformation into an elaborate functionally diversified organisation. New structures may be added to the existing body to complement and supplement the existing local level party organisation. On the same token, the party would also undertake a mobilisation of manpower either paid or voluntary, to help in the campaign activities.18

The BN electoral campaign machinery was well organised, giving enough latitude for the various component parties of the coalition to tailor their campaign to suit their respective community or constituency. For example, the UMNO campaigners when addressing the Malay voters would emphasise the Malay interests while the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)19 campaigners would draw attention to the interests of the Chinese community. In short, the campaign attempted to cater for the interest of the multi-racial society and at the same time cater for the narrow communal interests being defended by the respective party leader and their campaigners.

The actual administration of the election campaign centred around an Operation Secretariat at the Division (Pendang) and Branch level (Anak Bukit) respectively. Besides overseeing the general management of the campaign, the Operation Secretariat also undertook the printing of election posters,20 scheduling the tour of BN leaders and speakers, and monitoring the progress of the campaign activities in constituencies where the opposition was reputed to be strong.21 At a micro level, both the parties relied on the village level unit (kawasan peti undi) campaign machinery, which undoubtedly played an important part in mobilising support for the respective candidate. This unit, which was usually led by a party stalwart, would be privy to every conceivable data of the voters,
such as the address, sex, number of dependants, number of school-going children, the number of children at the tertiary level who were on government scholarship and more importantly, their voting preference.

Under the behest of the village chairman, another micro-campaign machinery called the “Unit 10” was set into motion. The Unit 10 was essentially a grouping of 10 households within a village, and within this unit, a party campaigner called Kepala Sepuluh or Head of Ten was placed. It appeared that the Unit 10 had been set up to promote greater cohesion between the party representative and the voters at the grassroots level. The leader of the Unit 10, besides possessing sound knowledge of voting preferences of voters under his tabs, also served as a direct link between the voters in his village and the candidate contesting the constituency. In order to achieve a greater degree of success in the campaign at the grassroots level, each household in the respective Unit 10 was designated into three categories. Given the relative openness of the rural community, it was often easy to identify their political leanings. Thus, the households were easily categorised as follows: firstly, households that were considered to be firm and committed supporters of BN and/or PAS. The campaign workers allotted to take charge of this category of households would have a relatively easy task of keeping his flock committed to support the BN. The second category of households were those that were categorised as fence sitters. This category of householders would usually betray their non-committal stance when asked probing questions by the party campaign workers. Once their leanings were known, the respective party would deploy seasoned campaigners to woo the voters into giving their support for the BN. Clearly, it was this category of households that would receive frequent visits from female BN campaigners who were adept at the art of persuasion. They generally made repeated home visits to this category of voters to convince them of the merits of voting for the BN. Therefore, in the house-to-house campaigning, the head of the Unit 10 would incessantly raise such issues as the virtues of the BN leaders as compared to the opposition leaders.

The UMNO female campaigners, in particular the Puteri UMNO, would highlight the various restrictions that would presumably be imposed on the womenfolk
if PAS were to come into power. They claimed that PAS wanted to curtail the dynamism of Malay womenfolk and force them into a cloistered existence. Undoubtedly, all these issues provided interesting material for the campaigners. Besides this, the householders would be asked to support BN-UMNO because of the many material and other benefits that could be obtained. It was noted that at times, promises of rewards in cash and in kind was often used in the rural areas to draw them into giving their support in favour of BN-UMNO.

The third category of households was the one known to be solidly in support of the opposition, i.e. usually hardcore PAS supporters. The BN campaign workers usually tried to avoid this category of households. It was revealed to the authors, that the BN campaign officer in a village even knew which household in which constituency to avoid since it would invariably be full of firm PAS supporters. These constituencies had continually given their support for PAS, partly for reasons of loyalty and partly because of the ideals propounded by the party. The BN campaigners further suggested that these groups of voters, tended to be more loyal to the party than to the contesting personalities. The authors were further informed by several campaign workers that such groups of voters were not only difficult to convince but were often hostile to overtures from the BN campaign workers.

Thus, for example, if a group of voters seemed wavering in their support for the BN/UMNO candidate, the leader of Unit 10 would initiate further action to bring the stragglers back to their fold. This was usually done by sending in opinion leaders who were respected by the stragglers to convince them to support the BN/UMNO candidate. Meanwhile, additional ceramahs were organised to counter any allegation made by the opposition party campaigners. In tandem with this action, more dynamic and articulate women campaigners would be sent on a house-to-house tour of duty to implore (merayu) the householder to support the UMNO candidate. This tactic of sending women campaigners, most notably of Puteri UMNO, was a particularly effective method used by the BN for they would target the female members of the household and entreat them to convince their menfolk to vote for the UMNO candidate. During these
visits to the womenfolk of households, the various UMNO Malay leaders were portrayed as kind, concerned and caring leaders of the people. Various activities and personal qualities of the leaders were highlighted in an attempt to paint the BN in the whitest shades of white and the opposition in the darkest shade of black.

The Ceramah

Since 1974, a ban had been imposed on public rallies because the government contended that public rallies contributed to the flaming of ethnic passions. However, the banning of public rallies did not blunt the intensity of campaigning. On the contrary, the ban on public rallies had led to greater emphasis on door-to-door campaigning. The ban had encouraged the use of audio and video-taped speeches, as well as greater emphasis on small group meetings or ceramah which today has become the most dominant and widely used form of campaigning. The ceramah was usually held in the confines of a party members’ house or in community centres (balai raya) or within the compound of markas or local election campaign centre of the political party. The ceramah usually drew a large number of audience depending on the calibre of the speaker, therefore the ceramah clearly resembled a public rally, only that it was on a small scale.

The person chosen to host the ceramah would usually be a strong supporter of the party, or might be a person who had been recently recruited by the party from the opposing side. The speakers would invariably be persons well known for their oratorical skill and they would also go on a circuit giving usually about three ceramahs a day. They would be given the task of explaining the BN manifesto and highlighting the progress made under the BN government. The speakers would also emphasise the need to maintain a peaceful, stable and prosperous Malaysia. Besides this, the UMNO division and branches of the constituency would be organising mutual help (gotong royong) sessions, meet-the-people sessions and tea parties to enable the candidates for the DUN and the Parliamentary seats to get closer to their constituents.
The Ministerial Campaign Tours

Evidently, the door-to-door campaign not only proved expensive in terms of financial outlay and manpower required to canvass votes. Undoubtedly, the well-funded BN campaign machinery appeared to have had the edge, yet the opposition campaigners more than matched that advantage with their enthusiasm and commitment for the party’s cause.

The BN campaigners had one big advantage over their opposition counterpart: the wide publicity given to visits of federal ministers to the state and constituencies. It was an undeniable fact that a ceramah led by the respective DUN and parliamentary candidate would generally be poorly patronised. It was also considered a poor substitute to rallies because the message delivered would only reach a limited number and range of listeners. BN leaders had long realised that extra effort was required to attract voters. Although mass rallies were forbidden, the BN was able to circumvent the ban on public rallies under the pretext of ministerial visits to the state or to the constituencies. These visits invariably led to the mobilisation of public resources and manpower to help the campaign efforts of the BN.

These ‘road shows’ were usually designed to achieve two goals. First, to show to the masses the kind of assistance the voters would get if they gave their support to the BN candidate. As a means to reinforce the support towards the party, there would usually be a ceremony to welcome former members of the opposition parties, especially of PAS and KEADILAN into the fold of UMNO. For example, in a ceremony involving the submission of forms by 150 former PAS members to become members of UMNO, statements or short speeches by former PAS and KEADILAN members on why they had chosen to renounce their membership would be highlighted (New Straits Times, 16 July 2002). Generally, they would emphasise that they had chosen to join UMNO because of its dedicated leadership and its commitment to Islam, which the opposition parties seemed to be lacking. Without fail they would also reiterate the many advantages the voters would get if they voted for the BN in the elections.
Indeed, the visit of the minister is dovetailed with his official functions of officiating public works such as the opening of mosques, markets and foundation stone laying for new projects; in reality, these public functions provided the party with an important avenue to indulge in public rallying.24 The added advantages of huge financial and manpower resources at their disposal also provided the BN campaigners with the opportunity to stage-manage the distribution of ‘gifts’ and ‘assistance’ to carefully chosen disadvantaged members of the selected constituencies. Of course, there was the usual distribution of ‘gifts’ and ‘development assistance’ in the form of school uniforms, bicycles, *batik* pieces, livestock and fertilisers to the poor and the disadvantaged members of the constituencies. UMNO campaigners also specially brought in 38 camels from Australia as an attraction to the two constituencies; these animals were eventually slaughtered and their meat served in sumptuous feasts for the voters and campaign workers of both the constituencies.25 Undoubtedly, these events gave the BN the publicity and the added boost in convincing the voters of the many benefits that may be reaped by supporting the BN in the elections.

The target group of voters in these rallies was subject to extensive speeches by the visiting minister, the state assemblymen and the members of parliament nominated to contest their respective seats. Additionally, speakers well known for their oratorical skill would try to convince the voters of the merit of voting for the BN. The audience would also be given details of the various development projects that had been undertaken or would be undertaken in their constituency or state.26 Furthermore, the audience would be informed of the sacrifices made by the national and state leaders such that the masses could enjoy such a high standard of living that was envied by other developing countries. These rallies, in addition to highlighting the BN government’s achievement in national development, served also to demonstrate the possible advantages or benefits voters could reap by voting for the BN candidate. These public functions served to discredit and disprove opposition claims and provided the opportunity to rebut any issues that were raised by the opposition parties.
In all the speeches, the various ministers and deputy ministers highlighted the fact that the Malay voters in Pendang and Anak Bukit should show their appreciation of Dr. Mahathir by returning UMNO candidates in the two constituencies. The other theme of speeches was that UMNO had always been a party of moderates and that the BN government had no intention of forcing the non-Muslims to embrace Islam. They stressed that UMNO had played a pivotal role within the BN coalition to keep the country unified in spite of its diverse racial and religious make-up. They stressed that UMNO was far-sighted and believed in working with the Chinese and Indian communities, just like what the Prophet Muhammad had done with respect to the Jews and Christians during his lifetime. They emphasised that UMNO had upheld Islamic values with an open mind.

Dr. Mahathir, in his Kedah Farmers, Livestock Breeders and Fishermen’s Day’s speech, declared that Malaysia was a multi-racial country which gave every citizen equal treatment. He lambasted PAS for passing hudud laws in Terengganu, stressing that the hudud laws was “their version of hudud and nothing to do with Islam.” He further claimed that under PAS control, the states of Kelantan and Terengganu had “no progress at all” (New Straits Times, 16 July 2002). In another speech in Anak Bukit, he stressed, “PAS had gone around making empty promises and that if they voted for PAS they would be assured of a place in heaven” (Utusan Malaysia, 16 July 2002). In another public function in Pendang, Dr. Mahathir, while welcoming 150 former PAS members into UMNO’s fold, berated PAS as a party lacking any fixed stance (Utusan Malaysia, 16 July 2002). He said that PAS was hypocritical and slanderous when distributing posters showing him as Catholic priest and another showing Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as “A Pork Seller not fit to be PM – Mahathir has chosen a wrong successor.” He asked the audience “How can PAS further the cause of Islam when it goes around slandering others since it is strictly forbidden in Islam?” (Berita Harian, 16 July 2002). In a similar tone, MCA Vice-President Ong Ka Ting asked “the Chinese voters to reject hudud laws imposed by PAS.” The MCA woman leader Dr. Ng Yen Yen stressed, “A vote for PAS [was] a vote for their hudud law” (The Star, 13 July 2002).
Clearly, the main thrust of the BN-UMNO campaign was that of development. Time and again the campaigners stressed that only the BN-UMNO had the vision and the expertise to provide for the needs of the people. For example, the Health Minister, Chua Jui Ming, while officiating a ground-breaking ceremony for a RM 12 million rural clinic project, said that the BN government had always protected the interest of the rural population and how by its efforts, infant mortality rates had been reduced in the district (New Straits Times, 8 July 2002). Similarly, the Kedah Chief minister emphasised that the state was implementing mega projects costing RM 4 billion to achieve the status of a developed state (New Straits Times, 8 July 2002). The Deputy Prime Minister also emphasised these themes during his many official engagements in both Pendang and Anak Bukit. He stressed that only the country was fortunate to have Dr. Mahathir as the Prime Minister who had spearheaded national development and that there would be no progress under a PAS leadership (Utusan Malaysia, 17 July 2002). Similarly UMNO Women leader and International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz stressed, “UMNO want[ed] disciplined Malays, but instead PAS want[ed] them remain uncivilised and undignified” (New Straits Times, 14 July 2002). She declared that the people should show their gratitude by voting for the BN because it had a proven track record of helping the people.

The UMNO campaigners were particularly focused on about 10,000 fence-sitting voters. Most of them comprised of new voters and female voters in Pendang and Anak Bukit. Significantly, the MCA and Gerakan campaigners focused on the 3,403 and 2,151 Chinese voters in Pendang and Anak Bukit respectively. The Kedah MCA chief for example stressed, “the Chinese [we]re with the BN, but [we] will still campaign aggressively to ensure that they vote for BN this time around” (The Star, 4 July 2002). The MCA president Dr. Ling Liong Sik and other top leaders of the party practically camped in Alor Star, and campaigned vigourously to ensure the support of the Chinese voters. In particular, they concentrated on issues pertaining specifically to their community’s interest. The Chinese medium schools were fortunate to receive gifts of personal computers (The Star, 15 July 2002). Dr. Ling insisted that the “Women, especially the Chinese voters, should show
their disgust for the hudud laws by voting against PAS” (The Star, 15 July 2002). Additionally, the small but numerically significant Siamese community was also the focus of BN campaigners. In particular, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the Deputy Prime Minister, Othman Abdul and several ministers, took part in meet-the-people sessions and drove in the message that they too would benefit from government largesse if they supported the BN. Similarly, MIC president Samy Vellu heavily campaigned to ensure that the 487 Indian voters at the Bukit Jenun rubber estate, one of the poorest areas in Pendang, voted for the BN candidate.

Indeed, both UMNO and PAS campaigners adopted a multi-pronged campaign strategy to tackle the various categories of voters. Of particular interest were the women voters who formed some 51% of the electorate. The UMNO women campaigners were brought in to convince them to vote for their candidate. For example, the Wanita UMNO (Women’s wing) concentrated on the 40-year and above age group while the Puteri UMNO members handled the younger women voters. They adopted a soft-sell friendly approach in their house-to-house campaigns. PAS was not left out either; it too brought in its women leaders and tried to convince them to vote for their candidate instead. PAS’s strategy was reflected in the campaign statement made by its Central Women’s Committee member, Dr. Lo Lo Ghazali, who reiterated that the party was confident of “at least 60% support from men in Anak Bukit and Pendang, … if most of the women follow their husbands the seat can be ours” (The Star, 15 July 2002). Therefore, their strategy during the various ceramahs was to exhort their male supporters to convince their wives to vote for their candidate.

Both UMNO and PAS also targeted the younger voters of the 21 to 30-year age group since they formed a significant 16% of the voters in both the constituencies. Therefore, they organised similar sporting activities. Nevertheless, UMNO campaigners brought in popular artists and pop musicians to entertain this category of voters. To a large extent they skillfully utilised the Puteri UMNO campaigners to woo this category of voters. They moved around both the constituencies in small groups visiting the poor and the elderly and undertaking self-help projects. Additionally, they also sent in their
members to stay in the homes of villagers under the foster family programme. Like their Wanita UMNO campaigners, they stressed that the UMNO candidates be given a chance because only they were committed to protecting Malay interests and would ensure development in the respective constituencies.

As the polling date neared, the candidates of BN and PAS, the federal cabinet members, the state executive council members and party leaders of all ranks turned up in large numbers at the constituencies to conduct house-to-house campaigning, lending a personal touch to the campaign. The Deputy Prime Minister who led the campaign was particularly the most visible and effective campaigner for UMNO. He relied on his personal charm and his pedigree as the son and grandson of renowned Islamic scholars. He also visited several Islamic dignitaries who were contemporaries of his father and grandfather. He undertook to meet the public in person and worked his personal charisma on them. More importantly, he was able to penetrate many villages that had hardcore PAS supporters and that had practically blocked out access to UMNO campaigners in Pendang and Anak Bukit. Time and again he emphasised that BN had brought about tremendous development to the rural areas and in particular to the Malays. He also cautioned the campaign workers to observe decorum and reiterated, “This is not a contest of who can come out with better abusive terms … let us not tarnish the image of the country with ugly incidents” (New Straits Times, 17 July 2002).

The PAS Campaign

Clearly PAS’s campaign tactics had strong religious overtones. The campaigners attempted to project PAS as a party that could offer salvation from the present state of morass. PAS Deputy President Dr. Hassan Ali described both candidates as “God-given” (Kedua-dua calon PAS di Pendang dan Anak Bukit adalah anugerah Allah….) (http://www.harakahdaily.net/article.php?sid=1962 accessed 15 July 2002). PAS campaigners also chose to emphasise the Islamic credentials of their candidates by stressing that both of them were not only well-versed in the Quran but were also professionals who qualified as role models for all Malays. They claimed that if their candidates were not
elected, then it would be a tragedy or disaster for the people of Anak Bukit and Pendang (http://www.harakahdaily.net/article.php?sid=1961 accessed 15 July 2002). PAS campaigners openly capitalised on the sympathy factor for the late PAS leader Fadzil Noor. They attempted to infer that the Sultan of Kedah was sympathetic and supportive of Fadzil Noor and the party (New Straits Times, 15 July 2002). The campaigners asserted that both the candidates represented Fadzil Noor’s struggles to bring about political change.

Like UMNO, PAS too brought in all its top leaders including its General Guide-cum-Chief minister of Kelantan, Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat. Clearly, the opposition campaigners in PAS and KEADILAN had a task of blunting or clarifying some news items, carried in the mainstream media, that appeared to be planted to confuse and to create a feeling of distrust of PAS among the voters. In particular, they worked hard to negate the allegations in a television programme called “Kelantan Under Eclipse” which showed numerous misdoings of the PAS-led Kelantan government and the idiosyncrasies of PAS leaders. Similarly, they also worked hard to counter the negative elements highlighted regarding the possible implementation of PAS-led Terengganu government’s Syariah Criminal enactment. Various PAS speakers termed the coverage as the work of ‘UMNO’s Television.’

Nevertheless, such news items carried in the mainstream print and electronic media had apparently very little impact on the hard-core supporters of PAS. Obivously, there was scepticism and even scorn on many of the news items carried on state television regarding PAS leaders during the campaign period. Informed sections of the masses relied on the electronic version of the PAS newspaper for updates and rebuttals of the mainstream media. In fact many of the PAS supporters expressed that they were very secure with their beliefs regarding PAS’s projection of itself as a party out to protect Islamic culture and faith. As a matter of fact, many PAS leaders asked their supporters to boycott the mainstream newspapers. In other instances, they used newspaper reports as a basis for their counter offensive against the BN candidates.

In relative terms, PAS campaigners and orators were better able to capture the interest of the masses with their witty, humorous and usually scathing attack on the
UMNO leadership. Indeed, they provided the local masses with much needed entertainment, which to a large extent the UMNO speakers were not able to provide. The speeches were also strongly Islamic in its theme and often resembled a religious discourse rather than a political campaign. The PAS *ceramah*, when compared with the *ceramah* held by BN, seemed to have been well organised and well patronised. Indeed, the PAS *ceramahs* looked more like public rallies. Few *ceramahs* went on throughout the night violating the police permit, much to the consternation of the authorities. Consequently, the success of the PAS *ceramahs* was much cause for concern among the UMNO leadership and speakers as the campaign reached its final stages since they had few speakers who could match their PAS counterparts in their delivery of campaign messages.

The PAS *ceramah* speakers, most notably acting PAS President Abdul Hadi Awang, was on the ground to defend their policies and insisted that the average Malay accepted the *syariah* law as something necessary. He stressed that “even non-Muslims would accept the *hudud* when they fully understood the laws” (*New Straits Times*, 12 July 2002). The PAS campaigners also undertook social work: a team of doctors was brought in to help conduct medical camps for the people of the two constituencies and at the same time persuade the voters to support PAS. The PAS campaigners successfully managed to convince the people that the spiritual wealth and well-being as propounded by the party was more important than the material wealth assured by UMNO campaigners when they hammered through the message of development to the people.

In the various *ceramahs* held by PAS, the leadership style of Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir was frequently condemned. It was alleged that he was authoritarian. As evidence, the speakers pointed out that he had shown no mercy for his former deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, whose appeal against a jail sentence for corruption was rejected by the Federal Court on 10 July, 2002.

PAS *ceramah* speakers, most notably Kuala Kedah Member of Parliament Mohamad Sabu who was infamous for his oratorical skill, had a field day berating Dr. Mahathir’s intended resignation as a sham. He suggested that Dr. Mahathir’s proposed
handing over of leadership during the recent UMNO General Assembly had created a situation where the country was not sure who was the Prime Minister. The various ceramah speakers also stressed that the frequent use of Internal Security Act (ISA) arrests against critics of the government was a clear evidence of Dr. Mahathir’s autocratic tendencies. Detention without trial, they pointed out, was against the spirit of Islam. In all the ceramahs given by PAS, the speakers reiterated that Dr. Mahathir and his cohorts in UMNO were corrupt. They were interested only in accumulating wealth and power. The speakers in the various ceramahs portrayed the Chief minister as a weakling who was ever ready to sell out the interests of the people of Kedah in order please his federal masters.

PAS campaigners also portrayed UMNO leaders as having loose morals and corrupt. The campaigners claimed that BN candidate Zakaria Said and Othman Abdul were living a luxurious lifestyle. There were large numbers of colour posters showing the luxurious residence of both the candidates juxtaposed with the humble residence of the Kelantan and Terengganu Chief ministers. The PAS campaigners termed both the BN candidates as “recycled candidates” and equated them to “used cars”, while the PAS candidates were “new cars” capable of trouble free service to the people.

The PAS campaigners undoubtedly reserved the most stinging criticism for the Anak Bukit DUN candidate Zakaria Said. The PAS campaigners chose to capitalise on the strained relationship between the candidate and the various UMNO leaders of the state, in particular Abdullah Hasnan and the Chief minister Syed Razak.31 The PAS campaigners had convincingly suggested that Zakaria was “a used car” and not the choice of the grassroots UMNO. In fact they stressed that he was the favourite choice of his cronies who wanted to enforce their hegemony over the state of Kedah. Moreover, the PAS campaigners sowed the seeds of distrust among the supporters of the current Chief minister Syed Razak, that Zakaria was a threat to his position as Chief minister. The crux of PAS’s campaign in Anak Bukit was to create distrust among the UMNO supporters who were opposed to Zakaria Said.
Puteri UMNO’s pro-tem leader Azalina Othman Said was subjected to the most vitriolic personal abuse by PAS campaigners. Posters alleging she was a lesbian were all over the place. Additionally, there were posters warning parents to keep away from Puteri UMNO. Similarly, as a counter measure, they called upon their supporters to prevent Puteri UMNO campaigners from entering their households. In many of the ceramahs, the campaigning activities of the Puteri UMNO members were criticised as unbecoming of Malay-Muslim womanhood (http://www.harakahdaily.net/article.php?sid=2016 accessed 20 July 2002).

The PAS and KEADILAN campaigners also censured the proposed policy to revert to using English language as the medium in teaching Mathematics and Science in schools next year. For example, the Deputy KEADILAN Youth Chief Saifuddin Nasution Ismail criticised the policy as something unnecessary and instead would further handicap the Malay students. Other PAS campaigners such as PAS secretary general Nasharuddin Md. Isa reiterated that the policy would further handicap the Malay students since they were already lagging behind in both the subjects, given the fact that they were presently learning the subjects in their mother tongue. He further suggested that such a policy would only serve to debase Malay as the national language (http://www.harakahdaily.net/article.php?sid=1951 accessed 15 July 2002). Other PAS campaigners such as Mahfuz Omar, the PAS Youth chief criticised the state government for embarking on grandiose projects in Pendang without proper planning. Moreover, they accused the BN government of neglecting the welfare of the local people. For example, despite Pendang being such a large constituency, there was no hospital.

When addressing issues pertaining to the non-Muslim community, the PAS campaigners tempered their argument by highlighting moderation as practised by Islam. Most of the PAS leaders emphasised more universal themes like public accountability, equitable justice and fair distribution of wealth. They consciously tried to show that they were a party of moderates. Its leaders time and again insisted that they wanted to serve the people and to lead a moderate lifestyle. They also contrasted themselves with the BN leaders who indulged in opulent lifestyles. They projected an
image that they were willing to listen and change with the time. With this regard they must have accepted that they cannot be too fundamental in their demands or proposed plans. They appeared to have realised that inevitably they had to work with the non-Muslim politicians given the multi-racial and multi-religious nature of the country. However, in the long-term, PAS leaders’ commitment to implement an Islamic state remained entrenched.

Despite both the PAS and UMNO candidates pledging at the onset of the campaign “to keep their campaign clean and stay away from personal attacks on each other and our leaders” (The Sunday Star, 14 July 2002), as the campaign progressed, both parties indulged in slander, character assassinations and intimidations. Courteous behaviour did not extend to the grassroots supporters and workers. Party campaigners were often pushed into a corner, leading to loose aggressive behaviour. PAS campaigners clearly appeared to be wary of UMNO campaigners. There were instances when UMNO campaigners found their way blocked by physical barriers across the pathways, which were manned by PAS campaigners. There were also warning signs against those who dared to enter their opponents’ areas. There were also reports of fracas between UMNO and PAS campaigners and often UMNO campaigners were put on the defensive. Moreover, PAS brought in additional reinforcement from Terengganu, Kelantan and Selangor in the campaign; this to a large extent changed the tone of the campaign since they were used to their own style of campaign, which was somewhat more aggressive than those undertaken by the local campaigner more at home with a multi-racial environment.

As the campaign wound down, the PAS campaign machinery appeared to show much more dedication and commitment to the campaign as compared with their BN-UMNO counterparts. PAS campaign workers demonstrated a noticeable enthusiasm for the work. The campaign workers this time were younger and significantly, the party had many female campaign workers. The PAS campaign machinery at all levels of the campaign were more active than their UMNO counterpart, more vigorous in their campaign and worked hard to keep track of voter preferences and other election-related
information. In terms of cooperation between the BA components, several campaign workers bemoaned the fact that DAP had decided to cold-shoulder PAS and KEADILAN and so were not so forthcoming in their assistance. A few of them suggested that perhaps they were reluctant to give their support because the party still harboured grievances of a personal kind against PAS and its candidates.

The Results

The results of the Anak Bukit and Pendang by-elections were announced after 9 pm. and 11 pm. respectively on the night of 18 July 2002, later than originally scheduled. This was not surprising since the closeness of the results, as had been expected, would warrant at least one recount of the votes.

The results gave a fair indication of the intense atmosphere prevailing in Anak Bukit and Pendang for the past week or so. PAS lost Pendang to BN by a slim majority of 283 despite increasing the number of votes it received from 1999. Anak Bukit remained in PAS’s hands, but with a reduced majority of 508. The voter turnouts had been almost equally high for both constituencies, testifying to the persistent fervour for democratic practices in rural Malaysia. The overall results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pendang (P011)</th>
<th>Anak Bukit (N15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>No. of votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Othman Abdul (BN)</td>
<td>22,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohd Hayati Othman (PAS)</td>
<td>22,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoilt votes</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Votes cast</td>
<td>45,713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter turnout</td>
<td>45,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of voters</td>
<td>53,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage voter turnout</td>
<td>86.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explaining the Results

By-elections in democratically run developing countries provide an extremely disadvantageous situation for opposition parties and candidates. The enormous resources of the state will be utilised to promote candidates of the ruling party, while channels for the opposition are blocked, forcing candidates to campaign directly to the people. Worse still, by-elections see a blatant concentration of state resources in particular, relatively small, areas, unlike in a general election, when such resources are dispersed. The distinction between state and party becomes irrelevant as patron-client relationships assert themselves in the typical ‘politics of development’ scenario.

To PAS, it is this ‘money politics’, which greatly reduces its capacity to compete on equal terms with UMNO and BN. However strong the willingness of PAS supporters is to make donations to PAS’s ‘jihad funds’ collected during open ceramahs, and from sympathisers, the funds are no match to the enormous allocations granted by the state to the benefit of the ruling party. In addition, however strong the willingness of PAS campaigners is to conduct open sessions, lack of control of the media is a great handicap for PAS in reaching out to those who choose to avoid the hullabaloo of mass politics.33

Our random interviewing exercise indicated that massive funds were indeed released for the BN campaign.34 In Pendang, the ethnic minorities were specially targeted by the BN. In Titi Akar, for example, members of the Siamese population were each given a bicycle valued at RM 100 and a landholding grant. In Tanah Merah, roads were tarred up to the very night just before the election. With such resources at BN’s disposal, PAS could be considered fortunate to have been able to retain Anak Bukit. In spite of PAS being the incumbent party, it approached the by-election as the true underdog. PAS’s defensiveness owed to the pressure laid upon it to defend both Anak Bukit and Pendang on account of preserving the dignity of Fadzil Noor. In a teleconference session between the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, and his
deputy Abdullah Ahmad Badawi immediately after the announcement of the Pendang results, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi emphasised how meaningful it was to have wrested a seat once held by the PAS President-cum-Leader of the Opposition (*Utusan Malaysia*, 19 July 2002).

Going through the electoral areas covered by both the Pendang and Anak Bukit seats, it was observable that PAS had retained its supremacy in the hardcore countryside where rice farming was the primary occupation. Despite each other’s efforts to penetrate into the opponent’s strongholds, areas designated as being unequivocally rural Malay and urban Malay would more or less safely be in PAS and UMNO hands respectively. But the margins of victories had narrowed down, due to successful incursions by both parties into their rivals’ hubs. BN, for instance, gained ground in rural Pendang by publicising Abdullah Ahmad Badawi’s Islamic credentials, ancestral linkages to Pendang and his visit to a well-known *pondok* run by Haji Aziz, a venerable figure throughout Pendang (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1 August 2002). PAS’s efforts to penetrate urban areas were symbolised by their fielding of professionals rather than the *ulama* as candidates.

The real battleground was for the votes of the non-Malay minority groups and the Malay middle classes, many of whom had verged towards the PAS-led BA since the onset of economic difficulties. In the event that the Malay middle classes were more or less evenly divided between PAS and UMNO, it was the non-Malays that turned out to be the decider. In determining their resolve to desert PAS, practical socio-economic considerations outweighed national issues. It was not the opposition to PAS-proposed *hudud* laws that encouraged the non-Malays to throw support behind BN but rather simply concern for their material well-being, which BN was prepared to boost. In 1999, sympathy for the disgraced Anwar Ibrahim swayed extra votes to PAS, but this factor was virtually non-existent in 2002. Although PAS attempted to portray its candidates as representing a continuation of Fadzil Noor’s struggle, the ‘sympathy’ pull factor of Fadzil Noor was not sufficient to counterbalance BN’s patronage politics so effective on fence-sitters. A problem would arise one day if people decided that they would no
longer buy BN’s money, but this would only come about when people vote according to principles, not whims and short term contingencies. In Anak Bukit and Pendang, nonetheless, national issues paled in significance. PAS even failed to exploit non-Malay sentiments against the proposed enforcement of English as the medium of instruction for Science and Mathematics subjects in schools from 2003 onwards. Opposition to this proposition, which would include Chinese-medium schools, came most strongly from Chinese educational and language associations.

Inter-party rivalry and squabbles were relevant in explaining BN’s fate. In Pendang, the BN candidate Othman Abdul’s victory was aided by the patching up of differences between him and the BN member for the Sungai Tiang DUN seat, Md. Rozai Sapian (Mingguan Malaysia, 21 July 2002). It was widely believed that Md. Rozai’s supporters’ desertion of Othman in 1999 had partly led to the latter’s defeat by PAS’s Fadzil Noor. Trailing during much of the vote counting session, Othman surpassed PAS’s Dr. Mohd. Hayati through the late deluge of votes from Sungai Tiang (Utusan Malaysia, 19 July 2002).

However, Anak Bukit was a different story for BN. The candidate, Zakaria Said, was known to belong to a different UMNO camp with the Kedah Chief minister, Syed Razak Syed Zain. It was said that since being sidelined from candidacy in the 1999 general elections, the UMNO flag had not been seen waving from his home, right until his eventual nomination as the BN candidate in 2002. Zakaria Said was generally viewed as a Putrajaya-endorsed candidate who could not see eye-to-eye with Syed Razak Syed Zain. As a consequence, inadequate support was given to Zakaria Said’s campaign from the Kedah UMNO. Ironically, only non-Kedah UMNO divisions showed any enthusiasm to wholeheartedly back Zakaria Said. Zakaria Said’s campaign further backfired when his former strongman, Haji Hamzah Ali - a former secretary of Kuala Kedah’s UMNO division which Zakaria Said used to head, also campaigned for PAS, whose candidate was incidentally his son, Amiruddin Hamzah. Much speculation could be made out of Dr. Mahathir’s special expression of gratitude to Shahidan Kassim, the
neighbouring Perlis Chief minister, at the expense of Syed Razak Syed Zain, during the post-election teleconference.

As compared with 1999, the votes cast for both BN and PAS rose in both Anak Bukit and Pendang. Assuming roughly that those who voted in 2002 had done so just as they did in 1999, the new pool of registered voters were a significant determinant of the outcome of the by-elections. We believe that these new voters were evenly divided in their support for PAS and BN. Nonetheless, the new female voters were successfully captured by BN through the efforts of Puteri UMNO, the newly formed youth women’s wing of UMNO. Puteri UMNO was particularly effective in Pendang, but less so in Anak Bukit due to lack of cooperation from the local UMNO. Being young, outgoing and active in the labour market, particularly in manufacturing industries in neighbouring industrial regions, first time female voters were dispelled by the rigidly Islamic image of PAS. The requirement to sacrifice their youthful world for the Hereafter was not strong enough an incentive to sway them towards PAS. Perhaps their perception might change as they mature to the realities of life, but as for now, voting BN was more fun and materially rewarding.

Finally, it must be said that the force of personality had its own significance on the election results. In Pendang, Othman Abdul’s easy-going character and ability to blend with all segments of the population gave him the edge over Dr. Mohd. Hayati, an aloof-looking figure lacking in inter-personal skills. PAS’s portrayal of Dr. Mohd. Hayati as the benign rural doctor was successfully rivalled by Othman Abdul’s wealth of experience and well-remembered services to the people of Pendang. One respondent, a food stall owner proud of the fact that his dishes were patronised by figures of all affiliations around Pendang, contrasted Othman Abdul’s likeable and helpful personality to Dr. Mohd. Hayati’s sombreness and failure to sprout a politically appealing feature. Moreover, being the son of a local religious teacher, Othman Abdul was able to rival PAS’s Islamic image. Othman was known to have cultivated good relationships with some PAS quarters, whom he also helped a lot, and to be able to quote eloquently from the Quran in his speeches.
In Anak Bukit, it was more the case of Zakaria Said losing rather than Amiruddin Hamzah winning the election. Perhaps Amiruddin Hamzah’s professional background did appeal to the urban half of Anak Bukit, but why then did Zakaria Said’s supposed experience not work in his favour, as it had for Othman Abdul in Pendang? Apart from the issue of factionalism within Kedah’s UMNO, Zakaria Said’s aggressive personality alienated the normally serene population of rural Kedah. If his selection was made on the basis of countervailing PAS’s perceived aggressiveness, the strategy backfired. Locals considered Zakaria Said to be abrasive, arrogant and wealthy amidst rumours of corruption. In 1999, his henchmen were among suspects in a mysterious murder case. One day before polling day in Anak Bukit, Zakaria Said was rumoured to have assaulted a Chinese opposition campaigner in a frenzied outburst of emotion. Further, to PAS’s credit, PAS’s victory had been achieved despite the presence of a significant number of ‘imported’ voters who were not long-term residents of Anak Bukit (Ong Kian Ming 2005: 300, 310-312). In the past, such voters were often suspected as potential ‘phantom’ voters sponsored by UMNO to sway the contest away from PAS at the final stages.

Conclusion

After unprecedented aggressiveness in campaigning by both BN and PAS, the Anak Bukit and Pendang by-elections concluded with results that were amenable to peace and security. In spite of the negative publicity given to the by-election campaigns as the dirtiest ever in Malaysia, no major unruly incident took place. Security forces showed a towering presence and praiseworthy neutrality throughout campaigning. Both PAS and BN had indulged in mudslinging and intimidating tactics, but to the credit of the security forces, violence was hindered. Minor hiccups did arise, such as the smashing of car windscreens in Pendang and the flashing incident by a PAS campaigner in Anak Bukit. Both parties suspected the other of irregularities, but these allegations were never given credence, just random media publicity. For instance, UMNO claimed that at least 500 ‘phantom’ or illegal voters contributed to its defeat in Anak Bukit while
1359 UMNO voters had allegedly had their names unlawfully removed from the electoral roll in Pendang (Salbiah Ahmad 2005: 360).

Following the by-elections, the state-controlled media persistently reprimanded PAS for its violent-prone tactics, uncouth manners and vulgar speeches. The Election Commission redrew electoral boundaries which PAS claimed favoured the ruling BN. The Commission bowed to state pressure to undertake necessary steps to outlaw candidates and parties demonstrating violence during campaigns (Loh 2002, Lim Hong Hai 2003). But the definition of violence would definitely be subjective. Small wonder the Commission had been dubbed “the next government department” by PAS. In our view, such allegations and counter-accusations are not abnormal in competitive democracies, only that in Malaysia, the ruling party wields an unfair advantage over its rivals by virtue of its control and blatant use of state mechanisms. Apart from this ‘party equals state’ scenario found throughout the developing world, the Anak Bukit and Pendang by-elections demonstrated rural Malaysians’ fervour for democratic practices and a successful exercise of political rights and political communication.

Postscript: The 2004 General Elections

Several developments have taken place in both national and Kedah politics since the Anak Bukit and Pendang by-elections of 2002. Most significantly, on 31 October 2003, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi succeeded Dr. Mahathir as Prime Minister. Abdullah’s likeable personality and ability to portray an Islamic image, as we have seen, worked wonders to deliver Pendang to BN in 2002. Indeed, such popular demeanours and credentials were instrumental in regaining mainstream Malay-Muslim votes for UMNO in general elections held on 21 March 2004 (Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid 2006). The massive reversal of fortunes vis-à-vis 1999 gave BN an unprecedented domination of parliament (controlling 199 out of 219, or 90.9 per cent of parliamentary seats), while PAS’s seats dropped from 27 to 6 in parliament and from 98 to 36 in state legislative assemblies. In addition, PAS lost Terengganu to UMNO and barely held on to power in Kelantan.
PAS’s hopes of making advances in Kedah were similarly dashed. It captured only one parliamentary seat and 5 state seats. In the state as a whole, electoral delimitation exercises in 2002-03 proved to be extremely advantageous to BN by having systematically transferred ‘surplus’ BN voters from non-Malay safe constituencies to marginal Malay seats in order to wipe away comparatively thin PAS majorities that had prevailed in 1999; in fact, UMNO benefited at the expense of not only PAS but also of its non-Malay coalition partners in BN (Ong Kian Ming and Welsh 2005). Ironically, against the general trend, PAS retained its influence in Pendang and Anak Bukit. The results for Pendang and Anak Bukit in 2004 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pendang (P011)</th>
<th>Anak Bukit (N15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candidate</strong></td>
<td><strong>No. of votes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohd Hayati Othman (PAS)</td>
<td>24,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md. Rozai Sapian (BN)</td>
<td>24,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoilt votes</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Votes cast</td>
<td>49,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage voter turnout</td>
<td>86.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures were adapted from the election supplement ‘Keputusan Penuh Pilihan Raya 2004’, *Utusan Malaysia*, 23 March 2004)

In the contest for the Pendang parliamentary seat, PAS’s Dr. Mohd. Hayati Othman rather surprisingly avenged his 2002 defeat by toppling UMNO’s Md. Rozai Sapian by a majority of 50. BN had paid a heavy price for disregarding the personal touch of Pendang’s old horse – Othman Abdul. Md. Rozai Sapian’s influence was limited to the Sungai Tiang state constituency, which had been given to newcomer Suraya Yaacob, in gratitude of Puteri UMNO’s contribution in drawing support from the Malay-Muslim female youth. The new Prime Minister’s national bandwagon was
evidently insufficient to countervail local influences in heavily rural constituencies such as Pendang. In Anak Bukit, Amiruddin Hamzah held on to his DUN seat, beating UMNO’s Abdul Mutalib Harun by a majority of 96, slimmer than his margin of victory in 2002. Within a short space of time, Amiruddin had demonstrably made his mark among the electorate of Anak Bukit.

In both Pendang and Anak Bukit, PAS’s candidates had cultivated a cordial relationship with the local population, who expressed more confidence in local Islamic personalities than some distant national figure, albeit the latter staking a strong claim to Islamic leadership. In rural constituencies, the grassroots population are swayed by a real experience of Islamic leadership close at hand, not just by a media-engineered portrayal of Islamic images and tilt. Our examination of the cases of Anak Bukit and Pendang accentuates the conclusions of another recent study which attributes PAS’s success in maintaining consistent support among the rural electorate to its ingenious localisation of Islamic discourses of an originally national, regional or even international nature (Farish A. Noor 2003). In rural Malaysia, the pre-requisite for political success is the capacity, during exercises of political and moral communication, to translate idealistic messages into those of practical significance for mundane lives.
Bibliography:

Most of the primary sources for this article were compiled from the participant observation and random interviewing exercises conducted in Pendang and Anak Bukit during campaigning and polling. The main targets were party workers and local personalities regardless of party affiliation. Most respondents, understandably, prefer to remain anonymous. The readable sources are:

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Endnotes:

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1 A native of Alor Star, Kedah, with an ancestry running to honourable families of ulama (traditional Islamic scholars) hailing from Patani, southern Thailand, Fadzil Noor was 65 years old upon his death. It was reported that about 50,000 people attended his funeral (New Straits Times, 24 June 2002), but PAS’s sources put the figure higher at around 250,000. Fadzil’s humble demeanour and open-mindedness had endeared him to people of all affiliations, as testified by the paying of last respects to him by senior UMNO figures, including the Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Defence Minister Najib Tun Razak and UMNO Secretary General Khalil Yaakob. Holder of a B.A. Hons. degree in Islamic Law from Al Azhar University, Cairo, he taught at his alma mater, the Maktab Mahmud in Alor Setar, and lectured at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Kuala Lumpur, before contesting the Kuala Kedah parliamentary seat and the Alor Merah state seat in the 1978 general elections, losing both. However, he held the Bukit Raya state seat for four terms (1982-1999), before moving to Anak Bukit in 1999. The 1999 general elections gave him his first taste of electoral victory at the parliamentary level, and also saw PAS capturing a record 27 parliamentary and 98 state seats throughout Malaysia. This enabled him to be chosen the new Leader of the Opposition. He had held the posts of Secretary General of the Persatuan Ulama Malaysia (PUM - Ulama Association of Malaysia) (1974-1976) and Deputy President of Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM – Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia) (1974-1978). In PAS, he was Vice President (1981-1983), Deputy President (1983-1989) and President (1989-2002). Following his death, Abdul Hadi Awang, the Deputy President-cum-Chief minister of Terengganu, took over the duties as party president. For Fadzil Noor’s background, see the PAS-published official eight-page tribute, Almarhum Dato’ Haji Fadzil Noor Dalam Kenangan 1937-2002 (2002).

2 The Sun, 1 July 2002. In November 2000, the BN state assemblyman for Lunas, Dr. Joe Fernandez was assassinated near his clinic in Bukit Mertajam, Penang, purportedly by Islamic radicals exasperated by his evangelising activities. In the by-election that followed, the opposition BA candidate, Saifuddin Nasution of the Parti KEADILAN Nasional (KEADILAN – National Justice
Party), won by a 530-vote majority, thus depriving BN-UMNO of its two-thirds majority in the Kedah DUN. At the time of the July 2002 Anak Bukit by-election, BN-UMNO had 23 seats, as compared to PAS’s 11 and KEADILAN’s 1, excluding the vacant Anak Bukit seat.

3 The 11th Malaysian general elections were eventually held on 21 March 2004.

4 Fadzil Noor has been rightly credited with successfully bringing PAS into the mainstream of Malaysian politics with his brand of accommodative opposition politics, which saw the eventual formation of the Islamic-based coalition, the Angkatan Perpaduan Umnoh (APU) in 1990 and a broader based coalition, Barisan Alternatif (BA) in 1999. With his perceived moderateness, under Fadzil Noor, PAS captured Kelantan in 1990, Terengganu in 1999, and made successful inroads into Kedah, Pahang and Selangor. Even the pro-government media has acknowledged Fadzil’s political achievements, see for instance the one page tribute to Fadzil in Utusan Malaysia, 24 June 2002. In an interview with Mingguan Malaysia, (2 June 2002), in response to speculation that Malay unity between PAS and UMNO could only be achieved under Fadzil Noor’s less than radical leadership, Fadzil Noor admitted that “the political scenario keeps changing.” Such vague statements, and his willingness to appear on stage together and shake hands with Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in public, such as during a function to commemorate the struggle of the Palestinians at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP – National Institute of Language and Literature) on 8 May 2002, made Fadzil Noor the target of criticisms by the PAS radical wing worried of any intention to re-incorporate PAS into the ruling BN. Aware of such criticisms, which were uttered even in PAS’s official mouthpiece, Harakah, Fadzil used his closing speech to the 48th PAS General Assembly on 2 June 2002 to explain his disputed actions (see excerpts of his speech in Almarhum Dato’ Haji Fadzil Noor Dalam Kenangan 1937-2002). Needless to say, such criticisms died down once his untimely demise was known.

5 Literally meaning ‘limits’ or ‘regulations’, hudud refers to criminal punishments as instituted by the Quran and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad), after lawful conviction in a syariah (Islamic law) court, such as amputation of the hand for thieves, flogging of eighty lashes for consuming intoxicating liquor, flogging for libel, stoning to death for adultery and flogging of one hundred lashes for fornication.

6 The divisional head normally gets at least one state legislative assembly seat. He provides input on who gets nominated to stand for elections at the state and parliamentary levels within his division. Due to his position and network, he is expected to provide patronage and other services to his supporters and favour seekers. However, their clout and influence often lead to autocratic tendencies of the incumbent and curtail the process of leadership recruitment and circulation at grassroots level.

7 He took over the post of Kuala Kedah UMNO division succeeding Syed Razak, who by virtue of his position as Chief minister, became the state UMNO leader.

8 In 1995, Abdullah Hasnan was the Kuala Kedah UMNO division secretary, and although a first timer, was nominated to contest the Anak Bukit DUN seat replacing the veteran Zakaria Said who had held the Anak Bukit seat since 1982. Subsequently, Abdullah was appointed as a state executive council member under Sanusi Junid’s tenure as Chief minister from 1995 to 1999. However, in the 1999 general elections, Abdullah lost his DUN seat to Fadzil Noor with a majority of 1,840 votes. While it was true that Fadzil Noor was a formidable opponent to Abdullah at that time, it was nevertheless believed that Abdullah lost by a wide margin due to the lack of cooperation from factions within UMNO who were opposed to his candidature. It was further believed that Zakaria Said had wielded an unseen hand that ensured Abdullah’s defeat.

9 Zakaria had who won the Anak Bukit seat three times, i.e. in 1982, 1986 and in 1990. He was a former state executive council member from 1982-1990 during the tenure of Osman Aroff as the
Chief minister. Although he had contested against Fadzil Noor in the 1995 general elections and won the Kuala Kedah Parliamentary seat, in the 1999 general election he was dropped as a candidate by then Chief minister Sanusi Junid. Following this event, he lost his position as the UMNO Division head of Kuala Kedah in 1999 to the Chief minister Syed Razak.

Osman Aroff has been Dr. Mahathir’s friend since the 1960s. Although they had had a falling out, he was recently rehabilitated as Dr. Mahathir’s personal assistant in the Kubang Pasu parliamentary constituency.

Othman Abdul, son of a well-known local ulama (religious scholar), served as the Assistant District Officer of the Pendang District before becoming a politician. In spite of losing the Pendang seat in 1999, he maintained a service centre to serve the members of the constituency.

Md. Rozai Sapien was Sanusi Junid’s former political secretary while Othman Abdul was aligned to Osman Aroff.

The candidate bank consisted of potential candidates earmarked for every constituency. The candidates of the list would act as shadow candidates in constituencies being currently held by UMNO and elderly PAS leaders.

Dr. Ammar Fadzil was a lecturer at the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), Kuala Lumpur.

Paradoxically, Amiruddin Hamzah was raised in a staunch UMNO household. His father, Haji Hamzah Ali, was a former right-hand man of Zakaria Said and ex-UMNO divisional secretary of Kuala Kedah. Amiruddin was the antithesis of the traditional PAS ulama-politician. A British-trained engineer, a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) holder, a former civil servant and successfully running a management consultancy firm, Amiruddin used to be president of Jemaah Islah Malaysia (JIM) of Kedah and Perlis. JIM was the legally registered version of the Islamic Representative Council (IRC), a student-based Islamic movement clandestinely organised from Britain. The willingness of PAS to accept Amiruddin as a candidate testified to the recent broadening of horizons within the PAS leadership, which used to shun cooperation and dialogue with other Islamic movements. In the late 1980s, IRC members were even banished from PAS on the accusation of having tried to infiltrate PAS and showering it with radical IRC ideas. In Kedah, Amiruddin was, inter alia, state chairman of the PAS Economic and Financial Bureau, executive council member of PAS Youth, information chief of the Kuala Kedah PAS division and PAS chief of the Taman Sri Putra branch, Kuala Kedah. Amiruddin’s background was obtained from the leaflet Calon Kita Yang Cukup Berwibawa: Mengenali Amiruddin Haji Hamzah calon PAS N15 Anak Bukit, published and distributed by the PAS Information Bureau of Kedah.

Local-born Dr. Mohd. Hayati owned and operated a private medical practice in Pendang town together with his wife, Dr. Rahimah Sahit. A former government doctor, Dr. Mohd. Hayati was well-known for his social services and provision of free medical consultation around villages in Pendang. His political career in PAS was mostly as an ordinary member of the Pendang division. However, he shone as the state director of PAS’s Medical Team and was part of its Medical and Humanitarian delegation sent to assist refugees in Herat, Afghanistan. For Dr. Mohd. Hayati’s background, see the leaflet Calon Kita Yang Cukup Berwibawa: Calon Kita Dr. Hj. Mohd. Hayati Othman calon PAS P011 Pendang, published and distributed by the PAS Information Bureau of Kedah.

Special prayer sessions for Fadzil Noor were regularly held since 23 June 2002 in the constituencies and served to invoke the dedication and sincerity of the late PAS leader.

For example, the Chief minister of Perlis pledged to send in between 5000 to 10,000 party workers of Perlis’ BN to help campaign in the by-elections (The Sun, 1 July 2002). Additionally, the Kedah State MCA leader, Beh Heng Seong, said that the party would mobilise 2000 members
to each constituency (*The Star*, 2 July 2002). It was confided by a BN campaign worker that on average they work on a ratio of one worker for ten voters. UMNO and BN branches of other states also sent in their campaigners. It was estimated that each state sent in an average of 500 campaign workers. PAS also obtained the services of a similar number of campaigners from the various state branches.

19 MCA was the second most important component party of the ruling BN. The third component party was the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC).

20 It was estimated that for the Pendang and Anak Bukit constituencies, about 30,000 plastic posters were printed for each constituency. PAS also printed roughly the same number of posters.

21 UMNO, for example, would have a scaled down version of the operation room to coordinate and oversee the campaign activities in the constituencies where it was contesting. MCA and MIC would have similar set-ups to monitor the progress of campaign in the constituencies where candidates contested on behalf of the respective parties.

22 The Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1971 was passed by Parliament in its first session after the 13 May 1969 ethnic disturbances. This Act prohibits any public discussion (including in the Parliament) of the following: "any matter, right, status, position, privilege, sovereignty or prerogative established or protected by the constitutional provisions relating to citizenship, to the national language and the right of any person to use (except for official purposes), teach or learn any language, to the special position of the Malays and natives of Borneo and the protection of the legitimate interests of other communities, and to the sovereignty and prerogatives of the Rulers - issues about which the different communities are sensitive." Under the same Act, an emergency amendment made to the Sedition Act by the Emergency (Essential Powers) Ordinance No 45, 1970 was made virtually permanent. Thus the amendment made it seditious to question or raise any issues on matters listed above (*Information Malaysia Yearbook 1988*: 112).

23 Organisers of the *ceramah* had to get a police permit, had to ensure that the crowd did not spill over from the designated premises, and had to control the volume of the public address system. They had to state the duration of the *ceramah* since the police would permit no *ceramah* after midnight. In addition, the speakers at the *ceramah* would also have to ensure that they did not raise sensitive or seditious issues. The police laid certain condition regarding where the *ceramah* could not be held. However, the present authors in their observation of the activities of the *ceramah* holders found that not all the conditions laid out were complied to by the BN or Opposition coalition partners.

24 For example, the Deputy Prime Minister, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, officiated the laying of the foundation stone for the RM 35 million Pendang-North South Highway interchange on 14 July 2002. The Health Minister, Chua Jui Ming performed the ground-breaking ceremony for a RM 12 million rural clinic project.

25 The camels were donated by Selangor UMNO members and it cost a total of about RM 190,000 (*New Straits Times*, 15 July 2002).

26 The Housing and Local Government Minister, Ong Ka Ting said that 44 small infrastructural projects were being implemented within the next two months in the two constituencies.

27 This event was originally scheduled to take place in Alor Star, the state capital. Within days of the announcement of the by-election, the venue was shifted to Pendang.

28 These posters were freely posted all over the constituencies during our fieldwork.

29 21 Siamese farmers received their land titles and grants on such a visit on 11 July 2002 in Pendang.
For example, on 16 July, 2002, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi paid his respects to Abdullah Ali, 77, the founder of the first Islamic school in Lampong Pempok, Kubor Panjang, Pendang - a virtual stronghold of PAS. Similarly, he visited Sulaiman Rabat, 82, a friend of his grandfather and the founder of a pondok school (traditional Islamic school) in Kampung Chegar, Pendang.

Zakaria Said sacked Abdullah Hasnan from the post of secretary when they were involved in a four-cornered fight for the UMNO Deputy Kuala Kedah Divisional post in 2001. However, both candidates lost the elections. The Kuala Kedah Division was headed by Chief minister Syed Razak Syed Zain.

The DAP had left the Barisan Alternatif opposition coalition after differences over PAS’s concept of an Islamic state. Its deputy chairman Karpal Singh remarked that the implementation of the Syariah Criminal Enactment Bill had made it impossible for the DAP to associate itself with PAS in the Pendang-Anak Bukit by-elections (New Straits Times, 3 July 2002). On 14 July 2002, Karpal Singh reiterated the decision of the party by saying, “at the moment, our relationship [with PAS] [was] irreconcilable.”

Nonetheless, according to Kerk Kim Hock, secretary general of the opposition DAP – former coalition partner of PAS in BA before withdrawing in late September 2001 after disagreeing with PAS’s insistence on establishing an Islamic state, the media had ‘overkilled’ itself by blatantly siding with BN throughout the Anak Bukit and Pendang by-election campaigns. This arguably led to fence-sitters sympathetically voting for PAS candidates. See the interview with Kerk Kim Hock in Mingguan Malaysia, 28 July 2002.

One respondent, who happened to be a civil servant [name withheld] whose friend’s wife was a high ranking employee of a government utility company, related how RM 400,000 was transferred from its Alor Setar branch, on orders from Kuala Lumpur, to fund the BN’s campaign in Anak Bukit.


The Deputy Prime Minister-cum-Deputy President of UMNO was unceremoniously dismissed from all party and government posts by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad on 2-3 September 1998. Accused of corruption and an array of sexual misdemeanours, Anwar Ibrahim was later arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA) for orchestrating illegal rallies to present his case to the people, tried and convicted in trials which many legal observers deemed unfair. Having spent almost six years behind prison bars, Anwar Ibrahim was released on 2 September 2004, having had his High Court conviction for sodomy overturned by the Federal Court. However, on 15 September 2004, the Federal Court upheld his conviction for corruption, the jail term for which he had served. Anwar is thereby barred from political activity until 2008. Anwar Ibrahim remains the guiding force of the Parti Keadilan Rakyat – product of a merger between KEADILAN and the once socialist-inclined Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM).

A fact accepted by even pro-government political observers but stoutly denied by the Kedah Chief minister; see the analysis by Zulkiflee Bakar, ‘Kedah jadi pertaruhan politik’ (Kedah becomes a political gamble), and the interview with Syed Razak Syed Zain, both in Mingguan Malaysia, 21 July 2002. Later, the national UMNO Information Chief, Megat Junid Megat Ayob, confessed that UMNO’s defeat in Anak Bukit was due to “some internal problems of UMNO” (interview in Mingguan Malaysia, 28 July 2002).

Memo: Isu Khas Pilihanraya Kecil Pendang & Anak Bukit (n.p.: Penerbitan Pemuda). This is a tabloid edited by the anti-establishment journalistic writer, Ahmad Lutfi Othman, and distributed free to the public around Anak Bukit and Pendang during campaigning.
Upon launching the Puteri UMNO division in Serdang, Selangor, the UMNO Vice President, Najib Tun Razak, praised Puteri UMNO for its influential role in helping the party face by-elections (*Utusan Malaysia*, 2 September 2002).

Pak Long Khalid’s food stall was situated next to the ‘RM 2 everything’ shop in the middle of Pendang town. Well into his sixties, Pak Long had a history of PAS activism during his youth, but left the party in disillusionment in the 1980s. PAS, according to him, never taught him how to pray properly.

However, according to Pak Long, PAS would win if Fadzil Noor were its candidate, for his charisma would have outweighed Othman Abdul’s personal touch.

The flashing incident proceeded to the courts. Abdul Razak Abas, a former PAS candidate for the parliamentary seat of Gua Musang, Kelantan, in 1999, was accused by Puteri UMNO activists of purposely lifting his sarong in front of them during the heat of house to house campaigning in Pantai Johor, Anak Bukit. However, Abdul Razak was acquitted of any wrongdoing by the Alor Star magistrates’ court on 26 December 2002 and, after an appeal by the prosecution, again on 9 February 2006 (*Utusan Malaysia*, 10 February 2006).

Statement by the PAS Secretary General, Nasharuddin Md. Isa, during a fundraising dinner organised by Kedah’s PAS Youth, at the Cinta Sayang Club, Sungai Petani, Kedah, on 24 August 2002.