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**FIELD REPORT: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS OF ELECTORAL  
CAMPAIGN IN N.13 BATU KITANG, N.9 PADUNGAN, N.8 SATOK AND  
N.19 MAMBONG DURING THE 2016 SARAWAK STATE ELECTIONS**

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## Abstract

The eleventh Sarawak state election was held on Saturday, 7 May 2016 after 12 days of official campaign period. This paper is based on the observation made throughout the campaign period of the 2016 Sarawak State Elections with a special focus on four constituencies in Kuching – Batu Kitang (N.13), Padungan (N.9), Satok (N.8) and Mambong (N.19). Both Batu Kitang and Padungan are Chinese majority seats. While Satok is a predominantly Malay/Melanau seat and Mambong is a Bidayuh seat. This paper aims to identify the campaign issues in the four selected constituencies and the key strategies of the contesting parties and the main voting determinants. This paper is divided into two parts. Part I is a general overview of Kuching so as to give the proper context of the studied areas. Part I also briefly discusses the election results and the candidates of each constituency. Part II deals with campaign issues and strategies of the contesting parties. It also explains the factors that affect the voting patterns in the four Kuching seats.

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## **Introduction**

The Sarawak State Legislative Assembly was dissolved on Monday, 11 April 2016. Subsequently, the Election Commission (EC) announced 25 April as the nomination day, leaving the election candidates and parties with a 12-day campaigning period. The last Sarawak State Election that was held five years ago on 16 April 2011, saw the nation's longest ruling party, Barisan Nasional (BN) retaining their two-third majority in the 71 seat assembly. The ruling party was expected to retain its electoral dominance in 2016 since the opposition struggled to put up a united front. Worst, the DAP and PKR locked horns in six constituencies, namely, Batu Kitang, Mambong, Simanggang, Ngemah, Murum and Mulu. All these seats were eventually won by the BN. As for the total number of registered voters, the eleventh Sarawak state elections would have a total of 1,138,650 voters, with 131,881 (11.6%) people from the age group of 21-29.

In the 2016 State Elections, there were 11 new seats created as a result of the 2015 delineation exercise. The new constituencies are:

1. N13 Batu Kitang (Under P196 Stampin)
2. N17 Stakan (Under P197 Kota Samarahan)
3. N18 Serembu (Under P198 Puncak Borneo)
4. N23 Bukit Semuja (Under P199 Serian)
5. N26 Gedong (Under P200 Batang Sadong)
6. N40 Kabong (Under P205 Saratok)
7. N57 Telian (Under P213 Mukah)
8. N63 Bukit Goram (Under P215 Kapit)
9. N66 Murum (Under P216 Hulu Rajang)
10. N70 Samalaju (Under P217 Bintulu)
11. N78 Mulu (Under P20 Baram)

Out of the 11 seats, three are Malay/Melanau majority areas (Gedong, Kabong and Telian), three Iban (Stakan, Selirik and Samalaju), two Orang Ulu (Murum and Long Lama), two Bidayuh (Serembu and Triboh), and one Chinese majority (Batu Kitang)

seats. According to The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH 2.0) and the Malaysian Electoral Roll Analysis Project (MERAP);

- a) BN has a strong chance of winning 9 out of the 11 new seats based on the voting trends in the 13th General Elections;
- b) Where BN-friendly seats have been created, the average size of the constituency would shrink between 25% to 47%, and;
- c) There has been a worsening imbalance in the number of voters in each constituency, making a mockery of the ‘one person, one vote, one value’ principle (Bersih 2016).

And true enough, BN made a clean sweep of the 11 new seats in the 2016 election. Even though, the 2016 election was not the best BN's performance, but it was far better than 2011 which gave Adenan a strong mandate as the Chief Minister of Sarawak.

**Table 1:** BN’s seats, share of state seats and popular vote, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016 Sarawak state elections

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2016</b>
Number and Percentage of BN state seats	60 / 62 (97%)	63 / 71 (89%)	55 / 71 (78%)	72 / 82 (88%)
BN’s share of the popular vote	70.2%	62.1%	54.7%	61.7%

On the opposition side, DAP won the newly created seat of Tanjong Batu but failed to defend six of the 12 seats that they won in 2011. The seven constituencies that DAP won in 2016 were Padungan, Pending, Pelawan, Tanjong Batu, Kota Sentosa, Bukit Assek and Pujut. Its ally, PKR, only managed to retain their three seats, while both PAS and Amanah failed to win any. BN won the remaining 72 seats for a clear supermajority in the state assembly

## **Kuching's Demography and Economic Background**

Kuching is located on the banks of the Sarawak River in the northwestern part of the island of Borneo. The City of Kuching include all that area in Kuching District containing an area approximately 431.01 square kilometres (166.41 sq mi) bounded from Gunung Lasak in Muara Tebas to Batu Buaya in the Santubong peninsula (City of Kuching Ordinance 1988).

The economic structure of Sarawak is largely export oriented, with primary commodities dominating the economy. About one-third of economic output comes from the primary sector; the 21.5% contribution by mining and quarrying activities towards state economic output in 2013 was more than double the sector's portion towards the national GDP (Malaysia: 8.1%). The manufacturing sector made up 26.6% of the economic pie, a tad higher than the country's level of 24.5%, while the construction sector constituted the smallest portion of the economy with a share of 3.1% during the period. The services sector, on the other hand, commanded the biggest share at 37.2% in 2013, up from a low of 29.8% in 2006, largely attributed to higher cargo-related transportation activities, air transport and tourism (MARC 2015). And Kuching is one of the main industrial and commercial centre for Sarawak. Many state-level, national-level and international commercial banks, as well as some insurance companies establish their headquarters and branches here. The economy is dominated by the primary sector and tertiary-based industry as the state government aims to transform Sarawak into a developed state by 2020.

There are three industrial areas in Kuching, namely Pending Industrial Estate (Mixed and Light Industries), Demak Laut Industrial Park (Mixed, Light, and Medium Industries), and Sama Jaya Free Industrial Zone (Hi-Tech and electronics industry). These industrial zones help to boost the city's commercial and industrial activity, hence making it a major growth centre in East Malaysia, as well for BIMP-EAGA (Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area). Kuching Port Authority (KPA), established in 1961, started its operation at Tanah Puteh Port (Sim Kheng Hong Port) in 1975 with an annual capacity of 350,000 tonnes. Its operation has since been shifted to Pending and Senari terminals with an annual capacity of 2.9 million tonnes and 7 million tonnes respectively. KPA also controls Biawak Oil Jetty

that handles petroleum products. Historically, the Chinese have contributed to the city economy since their migration during the Brunei Sultanate period after the discovery of antimony ore and also during the Charles Vyner Brooke administration who encouraged the migration of Chinese to develop black pepper plantation.

According to the 2010 Malaysian Census, Kuching has a population of 325,132. The city's population (North and South) consists of Malays (146,580), Chinese (120,860), Iban (28,691), Bidayuh (13,681), Non-Malaysian citizens (7,216), other Bumiputras (3,250), Melanau (2,078), Indian (1,626) and others (1,140). The Chinese are made up of Hokkien in the city areas and Hakka in the suburbs mainly. Other Han Chinese consist of Foochow (Fuzhou people), Teochew, Hainan people, Cantonese people, Henghua people and others., Iban and Bidayuh are mainly Christian with some of them still practicing Animism, the Chinese practicing either Buddhism, Taoism or Christianity while the most of the Malays and Melanau are Muslim. A number of Hindus, Sikhs and a small number of secularists also exist around the city.

**Table 2: Total Population in Kuching by Ethnic Group, 2010**

Daerah Pentadbiran/ Kawasan Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan <i>Administrative District/ Local Authority Area</i>	Jumlah Total	Warganegara Malaysia <i>Malaysian citizens</i>										Bukan Warganegara Malaysia <i>Non-Malaysian citizens</i>	
		Jumlah Total	Bumiputera							Cina <i>Chinese</i>	India <i>Indians</i>		Lain- lain <i>Others</i>
			Jumlah Total	Melayu <i>Malay</i>	Iban	Bidayuh	Melanau	Bumiputera Lain <i>Other Bumiputera</i>					
<b>KUCHING</b>													
D.B. Kuching Utara	165,642	162,305	137,637	121,112	10,315	3,648	1,336	1,226	23,543	723	402	3,337	
Bandaraya Kuching Utara	87,784	86,403	76,519	69,089	4,479	1,506	800	645	9,251	371	262	1,381	
Santubong Bazaar	886	885	858	820	15	22	-	1	21	1	5	1	
Kawasan selebih D.B. <i>Remainder of D.B.</i>	76,972	75,017	60,260	51,203	5,821	2,120	536	580	14,271	351	135	1,955	
M.P. Padawan (M.D.L.B. Kuching)	273,485	271,085	169,945	66,431	36,414	60,466	1,732	4,902	98,727	1,460	953	2,400	
Batu Kawa Bazaar	387	387	15	12	1	-	-	2	363	6	3	-	
Batu Kitang Bazaar	245	245	202	197	-	4	-	1	43	-	-	-	
Beratok Bazaar	1,662	1,658	68	2	13	34	-	19	1,580	2	8	4	
Kota Padawan (Batu Sepuluh Bazaar)	743	734	57	2	44	6	-	5	674	1	2	9	
Kota Sentosa (Batu Tujuh Bazaar)	2,850	2,822	1,079	202	492	356	7	22	1,724	9	10	28	
Siburan Bazaar	3,927	3,902	178	18	55	91	-	14	3,709	10	5	25	
Sungai Maong Bazaar	1,177	1,159	206	41	98	48	-	19	930	19	4	18	
Tapah Bazaar	2,156	2,147	86	8	20	48	1	9	2,056	3	2	9	
Kawasan selebih M.P. <i>Remainder of M.P.</i>	260,338	258,031	168,054	65,949	35,691	59,879	1,724	4,811	87,648	1,410	919	2,307	
M.B. Kuching Selatan	159,490	155,601	56,643	25,468	18,376	10,033	742	2,024	97,317	903	738	3,889	
Bandaraya Kuching Selatan	46,533	44,614	14,680	5,886	3,995	4,204	182	413	29,508	263	163	1,919	
Kawasan selebih M.B. <i>Remainder of M.B.</i>	112,957	110,987	41,963	19,582	14,381	5,829	560	1,611	67,809	640	575	1,970	

Obviously, Kuching is an urban/semi-urban seat, comprising of Chinese, Malay and Bidayuh-majority seats. In the observed seats, the Chinese majority seats are Batu Kitang and Padungan. While Satok is a predominantly Malay/Melanau seat and

Mambong is a Bidayuh seat. The ethnic break down for each constituency is presented in **Table 3**.

**Table 3:** Ethnic Break Down in Four Selected Seats in Kuching (%)

Seat	Number of voters	Ethnic break down (%)					
		Malay/Melanau	Chinese	Iban	Bidayuh	Orang Ulu	Others
Batu Kitang	17, 494	20.1	54.8	5.8	14.5	0.4	4.4
Padungan	22, 301	4.1	92.8	1.2	0.9	0	1
Satok	13550	69.5	23	3.9	1.7	0	1.9
Mambong	17, 467	4.4	26.6	6	56.9	3.1	3

### **Election Results In Batu Kitang, Padungan, Satok and Mambong**

In the four Kuching selected seats, only Satok (N8) had a straight fight between the incumbent, Abang Johari Tun Openg (BN-PBB) and the contender, the 36-year old food stall owner, Mohamed Salleh Shawkatali (PKR). Abang Johari, the deputy president of PBB easily defended his Satok seat for the eighth time by polling 79.1% votes. Abang Johari who is also the state Housing Minister and Tourism Minister had first contested the seat in 1981.

In the two Chinese majority seats, the electorate showed mixed reaction when Batu Kitang (N13) went to SUPP while Padungan (N9) remained with DAP. The support towards the DAP, however, declined significantly in Padungan from 72.6% in 2011 to 64.3% in 2016. On the contrary, BN-SUPP increased its popular vote from 24.7% in 2011 to 34.9% in 2016. Padungan incumbent Wong King Wei from DAP was challenged by Pau Kiu Sung, 44-year-old electrical engineer from SUPP and Teo Kuang Kim from STAR. Teo Kuang Kim lost his deposit after polling only 0.5% of the votes.

The highlight of the contest in Kuching was in Batu Kitang, a new seat carved out from DAP-held constituencies – Kota Sentosa and Batu Kawah. Batu Kitang was one of the five seats that had five-cornered contests between the BN and the opposition. DAP fielded its only Malay candidate, Abdul Aziz Isa, 26, who supposedly contested

in Stakan but at the very last minute joined the fray in Batu Kitang. PKR named their Women wing's national vice-president, Voon Shiak Ni as their candidate. The rivalry between PKR and DAP became one of the factors that contributed to SUPP candidate Lo Khare Chiang's surprise win in Batu Kitang with 53.5% vote followed by Aziz, with 38.8%. Voon and two other Independent candidates – Sulaiman Kadir and Datuk Seri Othman Bojeng, lost their deposit.

Another interesting seat in Kuching was Mambong, formerly known as Bengoh. The electorate in Mambong is mainly Bidayuh (56.9%), followed by Chinese (26.6%), Iban (6%), Malay/Melanau (4.4%), Orang Ulu (3.1%) and Others (3%). It was one of the rural seats that DAP had attempted to penetrate in 2016, together with Tasik Biru, Bukit Semuja and Kedup among others.

DAP candidate, Sanjan Anak Daik, holds a Master degree in Education from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and a Bachelor of Law from the University of London. Prior to joining electoral politics, Sanjan was the Head of the Language Department at the Institute of Teacher Education, Batu Lintang (*Malaysiakini*, 7 January 2015). Sanjan contested against three-term Bengoh assemblyman Datuk Dr Jerip Susil who is also Sarawak Public Health Assistant Minister. Joining the fray in Bengoh was Willie Mongin from PKR who is an information technology entrepreneur.

Dr Jerip, who won the seat three times since 2001 under the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) banner, had earlier left the party in 2014 to form another party, the United People's Party (UPP) together with State Local Government and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Wong Soon Koh and two other SUPP elected representatives, Ranum Mina (Opar) and Johnical Rayong (Engkilili). UPP became a BN-friendly party while Jerip and Wong continue to be in Adenan's cabinet. Mambong has been Jerip's political home ground for the last two decades. Before he first won on a SUPP-BN ticket in 2001, he had stood as an independent candidate in the same constituency in 1996 and narrowly lost to the late Datuk William Tanyuh, who represented SUPP-BN.

In the 2016 election, Datuk Dr Jerip Susil polled 6,161 votes ahead of both Sanjan Daik and Willie Mongin who received 2,828 and 2,645 votes respectively.

**Table 4:** The Election Results in Four Selected Seats in Kuching, 2016 (%)

NO	Seat	Votes Polled (%)			
		BN	DAP	PKR	Others
1	Batu Kitang	<b>53.5 (SUPP)</b>	38.3	7.3	0.5 (IND) 0.4 (IND)
2	Padungan	34.9 (SUPP)	<b>64.3</b>		0.8 (STAR)
3	Satok	<b>79.1 (PBB)</b>		20.9	
4	Mambong	<b>53.0 (BN Direct)</b>	24.3	22.7	

**Table 4:** BN's Popular Vote in Four Kuching Selected Seats in the 2011, 2013 and 2016 Elections (%)

No	Seat	2011 (%)	2013 (%)	2016 (%)
1	Batu Kitang (new seat)	-	-	53.5
2	Padungan	24.7	22.8	34.9
3	Satok	71.3	73.6	79.1
4	Mambong (formerly Bengoh)	55.9	56.8	53.0

### **Campaign Issues and Strategies**

#### **GST & Rising Prices and Cost of Living**

The 2016 Sarawak elections was the first election held after the introduction of a new tax system, Goods and Services Tax (GST) that has been heavily criticized by many quarters. The GST became a major issue in the 2016 election when PKR and DAP criticized 25 parliamentarians from BN Sarawak, who voted for the federal bill on GST in 2014.

Instead of being apologetic about it, Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem challenged PKR and DAP to abolish the GST in Selangor and Penang before trying to sell the idea to the people of Sarawak.

“I challenge Lim Guan Eng and Azmin Ali to prove this to us (first) since they claimed that they would abolish GST once they win the state polls. If they can do this, why didn’t they do it in DAP-led Penang and PKR-led Selangor?,” he asked (*New Straits Times*, 3 May 2016 ).

He criticized the two opposition parties for not stopping the tax system from being implemented in the opposition-held states. He used the same strategy when the opposition campaigned for free buses in Sarawak. Adenan pointed out that the DAP itself fails to provide free bus services throughout Penang.

BN candidates countered the GST issues by stressing the efforts made by Adenan’s government in lowering electricity tariffs, reducing assessments rates, and removing all tolls in Sarawak, which was carried out in the past two years. BN candidates were also able to convince the voters that the GST and the rising cost of living is a federal matter and Adenan’s government is doing its very best to mitigate the impact on Sarawakians.

This strategy is very interesting because BN Sarawak tried to distance itself from Najib who was unpopular at that time. By focusing the whole campaign on him, Adenan managed to kill two birds with one stone. First, he managed to deflect all the blame on GST, 1MDB scandal, rising cost of living to the Federal Government. Secondly, he could overcome the issue of unpopular BN candidates and leaders by selling himself. He even mentioned this publicly:

“Even if you don't like the candidate, just think of Adenan, as we are one team. There are 82 people in the team. Please help them because a vote for them is a vote for Adenan” (*The Star*, 22 April 2016)

Throughout my observation during the campaign period, voters were very convinced with this strategy and it was reflected on **Picture 1** where in the same banner, Najib’s face was vandalized but not Adenan’s. This picture was taken in Mambong town.

**Picture 1: Banner in Mambong**



### Opposition Schism: The Overlapping Seats

Out of the four selected seats in Kuching, DAP and PKR contested against one another in Batu Kitang and Mambong. Both seats were won by BN. Batu Kitang, according to Chong, was considered to be a safe seat for the DAP but it was initially given to PKR under an agreement between DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and PKR deputy president Datuk Seri Azmin Ali two weeks before the nomination day.

The DAP candidate for Batu Kitang, Abdul Aziz, was initially supposed to contest in the Malay majority seat of Stakan. State DAP Chief Chong Chieng Jen had named Abdul Aziz as the candidate for Stakan on April 21 and publicly lauded him as the best candidate for the seat.

To justify his move to put a DAP candidate in Batu Kitang, Chong repeatedly mentioned the Merdeka Center's survey conducted in January 2016 that shows DAP is more likely to win the seat compared to PKR. But PKR Communication Director Fahmi Fadzil said the survey was outdated and was done on the assumption that Chong himself, not Abdul Aziz, would be the candidate. In challenging Chong's assertion, Fahmi revealed a survey that was conducted from April 27 to May 1 by

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). The survey concluded that Voon would triumph over DAP's Abdul Aziz Isa in Batu Kitang. However, in the 2016 elections, both DAP and PKR failed to win the seat. Voon Shiak Ni and two other Independent candidates lost their deposits.

In Mambong, the opposition schism again benefitted the BN when PKR and DAP candidates were busy attacking and undermining each other. Even long before the election campaign started, PKR's Willie Mongin criticized DAP candidate for making a last minute foray into Mambong;

“Since 2011, I have helped to build three mini hydro power projects for three villages and organised over 200 political and social activities,” he told reporters today, saying each of the small hydroelectric schemes cost RM200,000...The other candidate only appeared in the scene in the last two years,” (*Malay Mail Online*, 28 April 2016 ).

Throughout the campaign period, Sanjan Daik was more determined to not lose to PKR rather than to BN. Ultimately, he won 1.6% more votes than Willie Mongin.

#### The Opposition Failure to Coordinate with its Semenanjung's Counterparts

Despite forming a pact called Pakatan Harapan, PKR and DAP were set to fight each other in six constituencies. Meanwhile, PAS and its splinter party, Amanah overlapped in five seats; Samariang, Muara Tuang, Sadong Jaya, Sebuyau and Beting Maro. In 2011, a significant number of Sarawakians especially in the urban areas were convinced of the DAP's message of 'Ubah' (change). But in 2016, DAP sent a confusing message when it continued to use the slogan 'Ubah' but publicly announced before the nomination day that the opposition's goal is only to deny the ruling party its traditional two-third majority (*The Star*, 2 May 2016).

In the 2016 Election, the opposition were seriously fragmented. On top of that, compared to BN, the opposition had very weak grassroots presence especially in the rural areas. In some of the seats, the opposition had to really depend on party machineries from Semenanjung. In Mambong and Serian (semi-urban, semi rural

seat) – DAP relied on the teams from Penang to run its the campaign there. From my observation in Mambong, most of the campaign team members were from Bukit Bendera branch, headed by the DAP’s Member of Parliament for Bukit Bendera, Zairil Khir Johari. Meanwhile in Serian, the campaign team had to depend on the DAP team from Bukit Mertajam, headed by the Member of Parliament for Bukit Mertajam, Steven Sim.

Due to weak party presence, a significant number of voters in some places in Mambong don’t know DAP and Sanjan as its candidate. Those who know Sanjan only know him as a former teacher. DAP’s weak grassroots presence and its reliance on national DAP only strengthens Adenan’s claims that the opposition in Sarawak are being controlled by Malayan politicians (*Free Malaysia Today*, 26 April 2016).

In Batu Kitang, PKR candidate had to rely on PKR members from Kuala Lumpur who were also campaigning for Citizen Declaration and Free Anwar Petition. They were surprised that their campaign was not well received by Sarawak voters who perceived these two issues as ‘Malayan issues’. This indicated that there were no attempt on the part of Semenanjung party members to understand the local issues and there was no clear communication between national and local party members.

Realizing that PKR and DAP relied on national opposition leaders, State Government strategically ban many national opposition leaders from entering the state. In Satok, for example, PKR only managed to bring Syed Husin Ali who is not known to be a crowd puller to one of its ceramah. And rightly so, only 10 people attended a ceramah that featured Syed Husin Ali. That 10 persons could probably be party workers.

#### Developmentalism & Money-Politics

According to Welsh (2016), Sarawak elections had been influenced by money politics – more than any other states in Malaysia. This proposition was further strengthened by Azalina Othman’s parliamentary remarks that the Federal Government had approved 409 projects and programs worth over RM792 million during the run up to the 2016 Sarawak state election (*Free Malaysia Today*, 24 May 2016). The announcement of both federal and state government projects during the campaign

period were constantly reported in the media and incorporated in PEMANTAU's report (Bersih 2016). And based on the non-exhaustive list compiled by *Malaysiakini*, the total value of projects announced during the campaign period was RM382.8 million (*Malaysiakini*, 6 May 2016).

Federal Minister Nazri Aziz, who was a former law minister, defended the government's distribution of financial grants and projects during election campaigns. According to Nazri, there is no rule in the Election Commission Act to stop the government from making project promises. The caretaker government is responsible in providing facilities to the people, hence it is not wrong to pledge any form of assistance or projects to the people (*Free Malaysia Today*, 1 May 2016).

As claimed by PEMANTAU and based on my observations, the BN candidates disbursed projects and then cajoled voters to vote for them. This strategy clearly benefits the ruling party since only they have access to financial grants and development projects. While the opposition could not challenge the BN's capacity to exploit development projects for electoral gains.

Abang Johari, for example, announced an upgrading project of Medan Niaga Satok worth RM13 million just five days before polling (*The Borneo Post*, 2 May 2016). Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Datuk Seri Tajuddin Abdul Rahman announced the progress of the roof project at Medan Niaga Satok. FAMA Director, Paza Dan said a total of 13 applications from across the state for the 'Kedai Rakyat Agro Bazaar' project had been approved and every participant's grocery store would receive upgrades worth RM80,000 each (*The Borneo Post*, 4 May 2016).

In Mambong, in the midst of the campaign period, Prime Minister Najib Razak pledged to allocate funds for redeveloping a community clinic and farmer's market there. Najib said this allocation was made following requests from the Bidayuh community at Kampung Sungai Duuh (*New Straits Times*, 28 April 2016).

Impian Sarawak Project (part of Impian Malaysia project) was one of the initiatives started by DAP to penetrate rural constituencies in Sarawak. Impian Sarawak Project provides basic infrastructure – roads, water and electricity to rural communities across

the state. With basic facilities in place, DAP claims that rural folks can then focus on “Impian Sarawak & Sabah” economic uplift projects such as cottage enterprises to earn stable incomes (Impian Sarawak 2016). In Mambong, DAP had completed a few infrastructure projects, including the construction of Muk-Ayun road (*New Sarawak Tribune*, 25 June 2015), pico and micro-hydro dams (*Says.com*, 7 October 2015), and gravity-fed water system (*Free Malaysia Today*, 10 October 2015). Financed by both national and state DAP, the Impian Sarawak projects were run under *gotong-royong* approach by volunteers who are mostly from Semenanjung. Unfortunately, almost all of the projects did not translate into votes in the 2016 election. In Kampung Kemas and Tebia, where the DAP had helped to build the Muk-Ayun road, the national opposition party only secured 10 votes in Kampung Kemas (out of 83 electors) and 73 votes in Kampung Tebia (out of 300 electors). Interestingly, in Kampung Tebia, DAP had actually received votes from PKR supporters. Compared to the 2013 Election results, in Kampung Tebia, PKR only polled 92 votes and it went down to 45 votes in 2016. While BN received 123 votes in 2013 and increased its support to 124 in 2016. This pattern indicates that voters who used to vote for BN hardly vote for other party as compared to voters who used to vote the opposition before. Nevertheless, the DAP via their publicity secretary Tony Pua asserted that the party is committed to fight for Sarawak.

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