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Ramli-post

I HAV PERAK UMNO'S BACKING, SAYS RAMLI

IPOH, Jan 2 (Bernama) -- Perak Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib said today he appreciates the solid support given him by all the state Umno divisions as well as the Youth and Wanita wings in the state to contest a vice-president's post in the party.

"My willingness to stand for one of the three vice-president's posts is not just to join in the fray but to fulfill the aspiration of Perak Umno to have someone from the state serve at a higher hierarchy," said Ramli, who announced his intention to contest the post yesterday.

All the 23 Perak Umno division and Youth and Wanita heads had at a special meeting last Saturday unanimously decided to ask Ramli to contest for the vice-presidency.

Ramli told reporters here that the meeting was held spontaneously without his knowledge and the sincerity shown gave him the confidence to contest.

"If I do not try this time, I do not see anyone from Perak contesting the post in the future", he said, adding that he would meet party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim soon to inform them of his intention.

Ramli is the second party leader to announce his intention to vie for a vice-president's post, after Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Badawi who announced his intention on Dec 21 last year.

Two of the incumbents, Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib and Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, have announced their intention to defend the post while Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has yet to announce his decision.

On his defeat in the contest for the same post in 1987 which was linked to disloyalty on the part of Perak Umno delegates, Ramli said: "This is not true".

"I have never doubted the loyalty of Umno delegates from Perak which is the state with the most number of delegates at the party's general assembly, anyway the number of votes I received did not differ much from that of the other four candidates," he said.

On his strategy for the contest, Ramli said he was informed that a state-level Umno action committee comprising all state division, youth and wanita heads had been set up to spearhead the campaign.

Ramli said he would also meet the other Menteris Besar to obtain their support. -- Bernama