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BN parties gearing up for by-elections

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KUALA SELANGOR, Mon. - Barisan Nasional component parties in Kuala Selangor have put their campaign machinery in gear for the two by-elections.

Although the date for the by-elections have yet to be announced by the Election Commission, several meetings have already been held.

MCA division head Lim Thor said the main agenda of the meetings were on strategies to ensure that the Opposition candidates would lose their deposit.

"We are confident that the BN candidate for Permatang state seat Datuk Abu Hassan Omar and the candidate for the Kuala Selangor parliamentary seat Datuk Jamaluddin Adnan will win hands down.

"However, we want to put to shame any Opposition candidate daring enough to challenge Abu Hassan and Jamaluddin, and also to prove to them that they have no place in Kuala Selangor," he said after attending a BN campaign machinery meeting today.

The two-hour meeting was chaired by Kuala Selangor BN secretary Datuk Hashim Mahmood, who is also Abu Hassan's personal representative.

Lim is confident that the Chinese in the area would vote for BN in the by-elections.

Chinese make up 23.87 per cent of the 18,517 voters in the Permatang state constituency and 19.34 of the 49,504 voters in Kuala Selangor Parliamentary constituency.

Most of them are either smallholders, fishermen or traders.

Malays who are mostly fisherman, farmers and smallholders make up 57.57 per cent of the voters in Permatang state constituency and 55.7 per cent of voters in the Kuala Selangor Parliamentary constituency while Indians make up 18.55 and 19.35 per cent respectively.

Lim said as far as Chinese voters are concerned, there were no issues that could be exploited by the Opposition to their advantage.

MCA youth head Puah Boon Choon said if the DAP or Pas fielded their candidates, it would only prove they were not sincere.

This, he said, was because the leaders of both parties had already come out with a statement supporting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's decision to appoint Abu Hassan as the next Menteri Besar.

However, he said, based on past experience, there was a possibility that the Opposition would field at least one candidate in the by-election.

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