

21/10/1997

DAP may not contest Sg Bakap

PENANG, Mon. - The Penang DAP is keeping its options open about contesting in the Sungai Bakap by-election and may not contest if it feels it will lose badly.

State DAP political bureau chairman K.Balasundaram added: "Until even the eve of nomination day, we may not make a decision. We may not contest if we find it is too difficult for us, especially if the emotive issue of 'a win in the by-election means support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad' is played by the Barisan Nasional.

"As usual we also lack adequate funds to contest the by-election. In any by-election the DAP is no match for the BN machinery. Also, the announcement by PAS that it will not contest the seat means the Gerakan can count on the undivided support of the Malays. This makes it tough for us."

He told a Press conference that if at all the DAP contested the seat it would be as an underdog and to fulfil the expectations of supporters and members who feel that the Gerakan should not be given a walkover. In that event, it will be with the primary aim of reducing the Gerakan's 1995 general election majority.

The Sungai Bakap by-election will be held on Nov 8 with nomination fixed for Oct 29. The BN has named Penang Gerakan deputy youth chairman Lai Chew Hock as its candidate.

Balasundaram said the DAP was concerned with the statements of Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and his deputy Kerk Choo Ting that the by-election would be a test of the people's support for Dr Mahathir.

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