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BN candidates to be named on eve of nomination day

KOTA KINABALU, Tues. - The names of Barisan Nasional candidates for the Sabah State polls will be announced on the eve of nomination day on March 2.

Chief Minister and State BN chairman Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said he would raise the issues of the selection of candidates and allocation of seats with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Kuala Lumpur tomorrow.

Dompok left for the Federal capital today to accompany Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Sakaran Dandai for the Rulers' Conference.

Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Osu Sukam is also scheduled to meet Dr Mahathir tomorrow to discuss the list of Umno candidates for the elections.

As the only Muslim Bumiputera-based BN component party in Sabah, Umno is expected to contest in most of the Muslim majority constituencies.

Of the 48 State seats, 26 are Muslim Bumiputera-dominated constituencies, 12 non-Muslim Bumiputera, six Chinese and four mixed.

All the nine State BN component parties were set up along racial lines and as such the racial composition of a constituency is a factor when deciding on the allocation of seats.

Besides Umno, the other State BN components are Parti Demokratik Sabah, Sabah Progressive Party, Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat, Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah, Liberal Democratic Party, MCA, Gerakan and MIC.

PDS, PBRIS and Akar are Kadazandusun-based while SAPP and LDP are Chinese-based.

In the dissolved State Legislative Assembly, Umno had 21 member, PDS (11), SAPP (five), Akar (three), PBRIS (two) and MCA (one).

The opposition Parti Bersatu Sabah had four members and the remaining was an independent.

Osu, who is Sabah Umno liaison committee chief, and other State Umno leaders had said the party would like to contest in 25 of the Muslim majority seats.

The constituencies are Banggi, Bengkoka, Usukan, Sulaman, Likas, Petagas, Kawang, Pantai Manis, Bongawan, Kuala Penyu, Klias, Lumadan, Sindumin, Sugut, Sungei Sibuga, Sekong, Sukau, Kuamut, Kunak, Lahad Datu, Sulabayan, Senallang, Balung, Merotai and Kalabakan.

The PDS is eyeing Moyog, Tamparuli, Kiulu, Inanam, Ranau, Kundasang, Tambunan, Tandek, Kedamaian, Kuamut and Kuala Penyu.

It is learnt that Umno and PDS have yet to arrive at a compromise on their dispute for the Kuamut and Kuala Penyu seats which are Muslim Bumiputera majority constituencies following the creation of the new election boundaries.

The incumbent Assemblymen for Kuamut and Kuala Penyu are PDS vice-president Datuk Joseph Saang and PDS secretary-general Datuk Wences Anggang respectively.

The SAPP is hoping to contest in Likas, Sembulan, Elopura, Tanjong Papat, Karamunting and Sri Tanjung.

The Likas seat, whose incumbent is SAPP president Datuk Yong Teck Lee, is also targeted by Umno as it is a Muslim Bumiputera majority area.

Akar president Datuk Pandikar Amin Mulia said his party would like to defend its Tempasuk, Melalap and Matunggong seats, while PBRIS is aiming for the Bingkor, Pensiangan and Kemabong seats.

The LDP is lobbying for the Kudat and Sembulan seats, while MCA has made no secret of its intention to contest in Api-Api, Sri Tanjung and Karamunting.

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