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Election-Opposition

"GIANT KILLERS" TAMED EVEN BEFORE POLLS

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- Several opposition stalwarts, some described as "giant killers" have backed out from locking horns with some of the "big names" of the Barisan Nasional (BN) when nominations for the Nov 29 polls closed today.

Others like former deputy prime minister and Parti Keadilan Nasional member Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and PAS central committee member and former Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) lecturer Datuk Dr Harun Din would not be contesting at all.

Anwar is currently serving a six-year jail sentence for corruption.

Anwar's wife and Keadilan president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail had earlier hinted she might take on Prime Minister and BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the Kubang Pasu parliamentary seat.

However, she submitted her nomination papers to contest the Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat won by Anwar in the 1995 general election on a BN ticket.

The Federal Constitution states anyone fined RM2,000 and above or imprisoned for 12 months as not eligible to contest in the general election for five years from the date of his release of if the sentence is a fine, from the date the fine is imposed.

Anwar was earlier tipped to either defend the Permatang Pauh seat or contest in the Lembah Pantai parliamentary constituency.

Anwar's lawyer Zainur Zakaria, the Keadilan candidate for the Lembah Pantai seat, said today Anwar did not want to contest "as he felt it was not worth it because he would be disqualified even if he won".

Harun, the PAS heavyweight who was also tipped to take on Dr Mahathir, once created an uproar when he said PAS would take Perlis out of Malaysia if it were to win in the state in the general election.

However, PAS decided to field Subky Latiff in Kubang Pasu but kept the people and the media guessing till today as to whether Harun would take on Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim for the Tambun Tulang state seat.

The PAS candidate for Tambun Tulang turned out to be Ismail Ahmad, the Perlis Pas Youth chief.

Talks of DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang taking on Pulau Pinang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon for the Tanjung Bungah state seat also did not materialise.

Kit Siang will not defend the Tanjung parliamentary seat he has held for three terms but he will contest for the Bukit Bendera parliamentary seat and the Kebun Bunga state state in Pulau Pinang.

Dr Koh accused Kit Siang of "not having the courage to face the electorate in Tanjung as he had brought no changes for them".

-- BERNAMA

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