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Umno-Election (Annuar)

UMNO PLUS KU LI STAND A BETTER CHANCE IN KELANTAN

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- Umno stands a better chance to regain Kelantan from PAS in the coming general election with Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah playing a more prominent role in the state Umno, said Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa.

As such, Annuar said, he would gladly make way for Tengku Razaleigh or Ku Li, as the former president of the now defunct Umno-breakaway Parti Melayu Semangat 46, is popular known, to assume that role.

Tengku Razaleigh has since rejoined Umno and talk is rife that Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would appoint him as Kelantan state Umno liaison chief.

Dr Mahathir is currently Kelantan Umno liaison chief and Annuar, the deputy.

Speaking to reporters during break at the Umno general assembly here today, Annuar described Tengku Razaleigh as an able leader and would handle the leading role better than him (Annuar).

Annuar said Umno has traditionally upheld the party president's prerogative over appointment to key party positions.

According to Annuar, he had expressedly indicated to Tengku Razaleigh that he would let him be at the helm of Kelantan Umno even before Tengku Razaleigh rejoined Umno.

"I wanted Ku Li to return to Umno," Annuar said.

Tengku Razaleigh was an Umno vice-president before he formed Semangat 46.

Annuar asked: "Which is more important? To be a big man in a small ship which will eventually sink or to be a small man in big ship that is safe. I would rather choose the latter."

As for regaining control of Kelantan from PAS, Annuar said Umno would need only a simple majority to achieve that in the next general election since it now controlled 17 of the 36 State Legislative Assembly seats.

"We need six to 12 per cent (votes more) to be able to form the government. With Ku Li back in Umno and everybody working together...that six per cent is not something that is impossible to achieve. We must be willing to sacrifice," said Annuar.

He reckoned that Umno would stand a better chance to accomplish that with Tengku Razaleigh "being in the midst of things" in Kelantan Umno.

PAS in an alliance with Semangat 45 then, unseated the Barisan Nasional in the 1990 general election with Umno/BN candidates securing only 26 per cent of the votes, according to Annuar.

But in the 1995 polls, Umno managed to corner 46 per cent of the votes. The BN also controlled eight of the 14 parliamentary seats in Kelantan.

-- BERNAMA

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