

'Up to PM to decide on the best candidate'

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs: Umno will not infringe on the MIC state seats quota by fielding its candidate in the Lunas state by-election in Kedah.

Its Kedah state liaison secretary, Osman Md Aji, said today it is up to Umno president and Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to decide who is the best candidate for the state seat.

Osman said BN is confident of retaining the seat, and the Umno Kedah state liaison body has already mobilised its election machinery to ensure victory.

He was speaking to reporters after attending a meeting between Umno state liaison secretaries and the party's secretary-general, Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob, here.

On Tuesday, Kedah BN chairman and Menteri Besar Datuk Syed Razak Syed Zain had said that there is no guarantee BN will field a candidate from MIC despite Lunas being a traditional MIC seat.

But yesterday, MIC secretary-general S. Sothinathan said party president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu will decide on the candidate after he had met with the Prime Minister.

Sothinathan said it was premature to speculate on the potential candidate as Samy Vellu, who is expected to return this weekend from abroad, will pick a few names to be submitted to Mahathir for his final endorsement.