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Abdullah qualifies for deputy contest

Abdul Razak Ahmad

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today qualified as a candidate for the post of Umno deputy president when he obtained 47 nominations - 14 more than the minimum 33.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who continued to receive strong support for the top post, has also earned 47 nominations - just three short of the minimum required to contest in the party's May elections.

The latest figures were recorded after all the 26 divisions which met today nominated them.

Since March 2, 48 divisions - or slightly over one-fourth of all the 165 divisions - held their delegates' meetings with all but one giving their support to the Prime Minister and his deputy.

Two of the aspirants for the of three elected vice-president posts have also surpassed the minimum percentage for candidacy. They are incumbent Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Johor Umno chief and Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman.

Najib obtained nominations from 45 divisions while Ghani received 28. They each needed a minimum of 10 per cent (or 17 nominations) to qualify as candidates.

Those who have also received substantial nominations for the vice-presidency so far are Selangor Umno chief Datuk Seri Abu Hassan Omar (16 nominations), Sabah chief Datuk Seri Osu Sukam (12) and supreme council member Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar (11).

Perak Umno chairman Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali today received his first two nominations for the post of vice-president from the Kampar and Teluk Intan divisions in Perak.