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Abdullah-Sanggang

BY-ELECTION NOT A YARDSTICK TO GAUGE PEOPLE'S ACCEPTANCE OF BN

KUALA LUMPUR, March 9 (Bernama) -- The governing Barisan Nasional coalition has done its utmost preparation-wise to defend the Sanggang state seat in Pahang in an upcoming by-election slated for April 1, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

"Of course we want to defend it..," he said while dismissing the notion among certain quarters that the by-election could also serve as a measure of the people's acceptance of the BN.

Abdullah was approached by reporters on this at the international airport in Subang near here after sending off Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for an official visit to Indonesia today.

Abdullah said that from experience, no by-election could serve as a yardstick for any purpose as it would not be reflective of the outcome of a general election.

The Sanggang seat fell vacant following the death of the BN state assemblyman Datuk Abdullah Kia last Feb 26.

Abdullah won the seat by 1,038 votes over his challenger from PAS, Abdul Rahim Latif.

The Election Commission yesterday fixed March 21 for nomination for the by-election and April 1 for polling, if there is contest.

The 1999 electoral roll verified last Feb 24 would be used for the by-election and the roll showed Sanggang having an electorate of 15,276, including 99 postal voters.

Meanwhile in KUANTAN, Sabah's Kinabalu Umno division will send a team to help in the BN campaigning for the by-election, said division chief Tan Sri Kasitah Gaddam.

-- BERNAMA

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