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Abdullah-Umno

OKAY FOR 11 UMNO DIVISIONS IN PAHANG TO DEFER MEETINGS

MENTAKAB, March 12 (Bernama) -- All 11 Umno divisions in Pahang will most likely be allowed to defer their divisional delegates' meetings to next month because of the party's preoccupation with the Sanggang state by-election.

Deputy Prime Minister and Umno management and disciplinary committee chairman Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said it has no objection to the divisions postponing their meetings.

The committee, which is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, would decide on the matter, he told reporters after addressing community leaders from the Sanggang state constituency at a gathering here today.

Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob first raised the question of postponement to enable the divisions to concentrate on helping to retain the seat in a by-election slated for April 1.

Nomination for the by-election has been fixed for March 21.

Delegates' conferences for Umno divisions in Pahang were originally supposed to start on March 18 beginning with Rompin followed by Mentakab and Kuantan the next day.

The other eight divisions namely -- Lipis, Pekan, Raub, Temerloh, Maran, Paya Besar, Bentong and Jerantut -- were originally scheduled to hold theirs on March 26.

On the Barisan Nasional naming its candidate for the by-election, Redzwan Harun, well in advance, Abdullah said this was to enable Redzwan to introduce himself to the electorate, including 6,000 Umno members, and work for victory.

He said Redzwan met the criteria to represent the electorate in Sanggang and in fact all Umno leaders welcomed his nomination when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir first mentioned Redzwan's name in Kuala Lumpur recently.

Abdullah said the BN would not issue a fresh manifesto for the by-election as its pledges would be similar to that contained in the one adopted for last November's general election.

Meanwhile in PEKAN, Defence Minister and Umno vice president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak told reporters that indications were, as of today, that the Sanggang electorate's mood was favourable to the BN.

"But we're not taking things for granted as several unpredictable factors can come into play in a by-election like this," Najib said.

The Sanggang state seat fell vacant following the death of the Umno assemblyman and state executive councillor Datuk Abdullah Kia last Feb 26.

Meanwhile in KOTA BAHARU, Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said PAS will name its candidate after a party central committee meeting in Kuala Lumpur tomorrow.

In the last general election Abdullah defeated his PAS challenger Abdul Rahim Abdul Latif by 1,038 votes.

-- BERNAMA

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