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Pahang party divisions may be allowed to defer meeting

MENTAKAB, Sun. - 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 April 1 Sanggang by-election.

Umno management and disciplinary committee chairman and party vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said it had no objection to Pahang's request for the postponement.

However, Abdullah, who is performing the duties of Umno deputy president, said the committee would meet on Wednesday to decide on the matter officially.

"The request can be accommodated," said Abdullah after meeting community leaders from Sanggang.

Pahang Umno chief Datuk Adnan Yaakob said on Friday divisional meetings in the State might be postponed to enable members to focus on the by-election.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob, who was also present at the function, said party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had in principle agreed to the request.

"Divisions located close to Sanggang can postpone their meetings until after April 1. But if their preparations are already in an advanced stage and they feel that they should proceed, they can go ahead.

"After all, it will be a day-long meeting and members can continue to help campaign work after that," he said.

Abdullah, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, said the BN would use its manifesto for the Nov 29 general election for the Sanggang by-election.

"We will fulfil all the promises contained in the manifesto," he said. The BN yesterday named Mentakab committee member Redzwan Harun, 49, as its candidate, 10 days before nomination day.

Asked on the early announcement, Abdullah said this was to enable BN election machinery to start work immediately and for Redzwan to meet the constituents, although he was already well-known among Umno members.

"He is capable of representing the people of Sanggang. Not only he is educated, but also acceptable by the people as evidence from the favourable response from Mentakab Umno leadership to his candidacy," he said.

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