

13 MAR 2000

Nominations-Update

THUMBS-UP FOR DR M, PAK LAH FROM 47 DIVISIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, March 13 (Bernama) -- Forty-seven of the 48 Umno divisions that have concluded their delegates' meetings till yesterday have nominated Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for the presidency and deputy presidency, respectively.

Tanah Merah is the only division that went against the tide by naming Kelantan Umno chief Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah for the two top posts.

The supreme council, in its Jan 3 meeting, decided that there should be no contests for the two posts.

The council, Umno's highest decision-making body, made a stand that Dr Mahathir be renominated for the presidency while Abdullah must be the only candidate proposed to fill the vacant deputy president's post.

Dr Mahathir needs three more nominations to be eligible to defend the presidency while Abdullah, an incumbent vice-president, has qualified to stake a claim for the Number Two slot.

A candidate eyeing for the deputy president's post must receive at least 33 nominations from the 165 divisions.

Eleven aspirants have joined the fray for vice-presidency with the latest contender Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali collecting two nominations as at yesterday.

Incumbent Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak is the divisions' favourite with 45 nominations to date. Only Tawau, Ampang Jaya and Kota Belud divisions did not propose him.

Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, with 29 nominations, is in second spot followed by his Selangor counterpart Datuk Seri Abu Hassan Omar having picked up 16.

Datuk Osu Sukam has garnered 12 nominations, Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar (11), Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad (10), incumbent Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib (eight), Datuk Dr Rais Yatim (five), Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (three) and Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (two).

Najib and Ghani have qualified as they have exceeded the 17 nominations required.

Ghani, Abu Hassan and Osu were nominated by all the divisions in their respective states that have met so far.

For Isa, of the two divisions that have held their meetings in Negeri Sembilan thus far, only Rasah opted for him while Seremban supported Najib, Ghani and Rais.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz gained one more nomination from Sabah through the Libaran division today, bringing to 46 the number of nominations she received for the Wanita Umno chief's post.

The movement's incumbent head Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman has 28 to her credit as of today.

Deputy Minister in Prime Minister's Department Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil secured one more nomination from the Libaran division to contest the movement's vice-head post, further increasing her tally to 47.

Her closest rival Aionon Khairiyah Mohamed Abas has 22 with the movement's incumbent vice-head Datuk Napsiah Omar eight.

For Umno Youth chief's post, the movement's acting head Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein is far ahead with 75 nominations against one by his sole challenger Raja Munir Raja Mustapha from the Tanjong division in Penang.

Youth exco member Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir is leading with 59 nominations for the vice-head post against 14 by fellow exco member Zein Isma Ismail, Mustapha Khalid (four) and Zahidi Zainul Abidin (one).

-- BERNAMA

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