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Abdullah: Chong to lead Barisan Nasional campaign

KOTA KINABALU, Sat. - Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat will head the Barisan National effort for the Likas by-election.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he would propose to BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that Chong lead and co-ordinate the coalition's campaign in Likas.

He also said the BN was confident of retaining the seat, which was won by its candidate, Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) president Datuk Yong Teck Lee, in the 1999 State election. The result was overturned by a court decision.

Abdullah said he would discuss the choice of candidate with Dr Mahathir.

"Of course there are parties which have shown interest in naming a candidate, that to us doesn't matter. We do not stop any quarters from wanting to become the candidate.

"What is important is that when a decision is made, we must support the candidate. I don't think I need to speculate on the (choice of) candidate," Abdullah told reporters after meeting leaders of Sabah Umno, Sabah BN and the Gaya Umno division here today.

"We have reached an agreement that BN will field a candidate in Likas and whoever is named, the person will get the full support of all components to ensure a victory during the by-election."

On Parti Keadilan Nasional's interest to field a candidate, Abdullah said: "We don't have to worry. I am sure there is somebody who wants to contest against the BN. Come what may, we will face the person and we will work hard for our candidate."

On the electoral roll which will be used for the by-election, he said the Election Commission was more concerned about the electoral roll because it was responsible for it.

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