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Likas BN candidate likely to be from SAPP

KUALA TERENGGANU, Sat. - The candidate for the Likas by-election will be decided after a meeting with Barisan Nasional president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, but the person would likely be from the Sabah Progressive Party.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the choice of candidate for the by-election should not be a problem, he told reporters after closing the Young Missionary Movement convention today.

Asked if BN would retain the Likas seat, Abdullah said BN was confident of winning the by-election.

The Likas State seat fell vacant following a decision by Election Court judge Datuk Muhammad Kamil Awang who set aside the Likas election results saying that the 1998 electoral roll used in the election was illegal due to the existence of non-citizens and phantom voters.

The Likas seat was won by former Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee in the March 13, 1999 State election.

In Kuantan, Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said Umno will extend its full co-operation and support to Sabah Barisan Nasional to ensure that the Likas State seat remains in the hands of the coalition.

"We will discuss the preparations with the Sabah Umno liaison committee. The Umno headquarters will also send its people there to make an assessment.

"We will also hold discussions with Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, who is Sabah BN chairman, as Likas is not an Umno seat," he said after a meet-the-people session at Kampung Kempadang yesterday.

In Temerloh, Pahang Barisan Nasional chairman and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said the State BN would send a delegation to Sabah to help prepare for the by-election.

In Kota Kinabalu, Chong said Sabah Barisan Nasional will meet soon to prepare for the by-election.

Component leaders would discuss the eligibility of Yong, who is Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) president, to re-contest the seat he has held since 1985.

Speaking to reporters after a Harvest Festival gathering organised by the Royal Sabah Turf Club here, Chong said he met Yong yesterday.

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