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Abdullah-Likas

SAPP MAY BE GIVEN LIKAS SEAT AGAIN, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA TERENGGANU, June 10 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional (BN) will most likely field a suitable candidate from Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) in the upcoming Likas by-election, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said it was a normal practice in the BN that whenever a seat fell vacant, the component party which represented the constituency would be given the opportunity again to field a candidate.

"Sometimes there'll be changes but for the Likas by-election, I think there is no change as we do not want a replacement," he told reporters after closing the National Youth Dakwah Congress and launching the Youth Dakwah Movement here.

He said this when asked to comment on the BN candidate and the component party to be given the seat to contest in the impending by-election.

The Kota Kinabalu High Court on Friday nullified the election results for the seat, declaring that the 1998 electoral rolls used in the state election on March 13, 1999 was illegal as it contained names of non-citizens and phantom voters.

The Likas seat was won by former Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee in a six-way contest.

Following the court's decision, a by-election will be held in the constituency as under the law, there is no appeal for judgments in cases under the Election Offences Act.

Abdullah, who is also BN deputy chairman, said it is a common practice in the ruling coalition that when a seat is taken away from a component party, the party would be replaced with another seat.

"But in this by-election, such a thing does not happen. So, most likely the candidate will be from the same party," he said.

He, however, said a final decision would be made after discussions with Prime Minister and BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Abdullah said he was confident the BN could retain the seat.

-- BERNAMA

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