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Taib-Election

S'WAK BN FINALISES CANDIDATES FOR STATE POLLS, SAYS CM

KUCHING, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud dropped hints today about the date of the impending state election, saying it will not be a surprise.

He said he already had the date in mind when to dissolve the State Legislative Assembly.

Speculations have heightened over the last few days here that the Legislative Assembly will be dissolved by the end of the month with the election to follow before the end of September.

" I certainly have the date when to dissolve the state legislature and the date won't be a surprise," he told reporters here.

" I would never spring a surprise when it comes to state election. The government is fair in giving the opposition time to campaign too," he said.

The chief minister also said the ruling state Barisan Nasional (BN) had finalised its list of 62 candidates for the polls.

Abdul Taib said he would meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad, who is the BN chairman, soon to endorse the list and brief him on preparations for the election.

"I have finalised the candidates' line-up for the 62 seats. The prime minister will have the final say".

Dr Mahathir is currently on vacation overseas before visiting Yemen and Uganda. He is scheduled to return on Aug 23.

Asked about press reports that a group led by former Defence Minister Datuk Abang Abu Bakar Mustapha would field 45 independent candidates in the election, Abdul Taib said it was up to the people to decide.

"We have worked hard and they would definitely choose the BN," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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