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Umno Youth: We won't repeat mistakes

KANGAR, Mon. - Umno Youth will not repeat the mistakes that led to Barisan Nasional's defeat in Lunas in campaigning for the upcoming Indera Kayangan State by-election.

The movement's deputy chief Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir said that with Parti Keadilan Nasional expected to field a Malay candidate for the Indera Kayangan by-election, the stage would be set for another "Lunas"-like confrontation between a Malay Opposition and a non-Malay Barisan Nasional candidate.

"We have been told that Keadilan will likely place a Malay candidate here, so we want to see if they will employ the same tactics.

"We will be prepared for them," he said.

Abdul Aziz said this before attending a meeting with Perlis Barisan Nasional chairman and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim at the latter's office here.

In the Nov 29 Kedah State Assembly by-election last year, Keadilan candidate Saifuddin Nasution Ismail defeated the BN's S. Anthonysamy by a 530-vote majority, amid allegations that the Opposition had used racial and religious issues to stir voter sentiments.

Abdul Aziz, who was then head of Umno Youth's by-election campaign committee, reportedly tendered his resignation as the movement deputy chief following the defeat.

His resignation letter, addressed to Umno president and BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the following month, was rejected.

Asked whether the absence of Keadilan Youth chief Mohamad Ezam Mohd Noor, currently being held under the Internal Security Act, would provide an advantage to the BN Youth campaign, Abdul Aziz said it was of little consequence.

"We did not lose Lunas because Keadilan Youth was strong.

"We lost because our strategy was wrong... the way we mobilised then was wrong, so we will not repeat those same mistakes here."

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