

# PM to reveal candidates' names

PETALING JAYA: The Barisan Nasional candidates for the Pendang and Anak Bukit by-elections will be revealed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad after he returns from overseas.

Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain said the probable names would be submitted for Dr Mahathir's approval.

"I will leave it to him to decide who shall be contesting," Syed Razak, who is also state Barisan election campaign director, said last week.

So far, a few names have been suggested for the two seats.

Heading the list for the Anak Bukit state seat is Datuk Zakaria Said, who is the former Kuala Kedah MP and Anak Bukit assemblyman, while former Mara chairman Datuk Othman Abdul is among two candidates being considered for Pendang.

Besides Zakaria, former state executive councillor Datuk Abdullah Hasnan Kamarudin is also in the running together with Anak Bukit Youth chief Mutalib Harun and his deputy Syed Azman Syed Yahaya.

Pendang division Youth chief Najamudin Darus, a corporate figure, is in the running for Pendang.

Syed Razak said Barisan considered winning both seats as crucial in gearing up for the next general election.

"I want to quell rumours which said we have given up on Pendang and that we are concentrating only in Anak Bukit to get back our two-thirds majority," he added.

In a related development, Umno leaders said Anak Bukit held the key to Barisan's success in the next elections.

"It has been a psychological

advantage for PAS in taking Anak Bukit because the royal family stays there," a leader said, adding that PAS had been campaigning along the lines that the palace was with the party and so should the rakyat.

"This is a fallacy because the Sultan, who is the religious head in Kedah, has always remained neutral. The palace has not sided any political party but only the rakyat," he said.

Another leader said PAS had produced a calendar of the visit its members made to the Anak Bukit palace two years ago after the party won 12 state and eight parliamentary seats.

"They had a picture taken together with the Sultan produced in the calendar which were distributed widely among the rural Malays to give the impression that the party had the support of the palace," he added.