

02 OCT 2002

Abdullah-Gaya

BIG WIN IN GAYA IMPORTANT FOR BN, SAYS ABDULLAH

KOTA KINABALU, Oct 2 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the by-election for the Gaya parliamentary seat is still important to Barisan Nasional (BN) although it is confident of winning.

The Deputy Prime Minister said how big a majority that would be obtained by BN had great significance to the party.

He said it would not only continue to "warm up" the BN machinery in facing the bigger general election but also provide new experience to again work together with Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) which had rejoined BN early this year.

"I am made to understand all leaders of the BN component parties are giving full support to the BN candidate and based on this fact, I believe BN will get a big majority," he said at a meeting with the BN election machinery, here tonight.

He also conveyed Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's best wishes to every member of the BN machinery for the by-election.

BN has nominated Liew Teck Chan, 54, a businessman who is also Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) vice-president, as its candidate for the by-election.

Nomination day for the by-election is tomorrow and if there is a contest, polling will be on Oct 12.

The Gaya parliamentary seat fell vacant when the incumbent representative, Datuk Yong Teck Lee, who is also SAPP president, was disqualified following the decision of the Election Court last year that he had committed corrupt practices during the 1999 state election.

Abdullah, who is also BN deputy chairman, said the ruling coalition would give full concentration to win the by-election.

-- BERNAMA

JS AO