

01 OCT 2002

Gaya-Candidate

CHONG TO ANNOUNCE BN CANDIDATE FOR GAYA TOMORROW

KOTA KINABALU, Oct 1 (Bernama) -- Chief Minister Datuk Chong Kah Kiat will announce tomorrow the Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate for the Gaya parliamentary by-election.

Chong, who is Sabah BN chairman, said the announcement would be made at the BN headquarters in Putatan Square after the state BN meeting which would start at 10am.

Chong said he met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad together with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi this morning to discuss the matter.

"We had a fruitful and a very good discussion...we have decided on the candidate. I was instructed by Prime Minister to make the announcement tomorrow," he told reporters at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport upon arrival from Kuala Lumpur.

Asked whether the BN leadership faced problems in picking the candidate, Chong said: "No, it was a very good meeting."

At least three BN component parties had indicated interests to field a candidate for the Gaya seat, including Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP).

SAPP president Datuk Yong Teck Lee had earlier said that the party had identified a candidate to contest the seat should the party was allowed to defend the seat.

According to a party source, heading the list of potential candidates is SAPP vice-president and Likas division chairman Liew Teck Chuan.

Before this, Parti Keadilan Nasional (Keadilan) leadership had named Sabah Keadilan deputy liaison head Christina Liew as its candidate, while the DAP had picked its Kota Kinabalu branch chief Dr Hiew King Cheu as its choice for the seat.

The Gaya seat fell vacant after Yong was disqualified as the MP for Gaya following the Election Court's decision that he had committed corrupt practice during the 1999 Sabah state election.

Nomination has been fixed for Thursday and polling will be held on Oct 12 in the event of a contest.

In the 1999 general election, Yong obtained 15,315 votes, beating two other candidates with a majority of 4,117 votes. Gaya has 49,427 electorate, including 76 postal voters.

-- BERNAMA

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