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Decision day for 7,900 Indera Kayangan voters today

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KANGAR, Fri. - Tomorrow voters in Indera Kayangan will decide who their new representative will be.

They will choose between Barisan Nasional's Ooi Ah Lan, 58, and Parti Keadilan Nasional's Khoo Yang Chong, 60.

Indera Kayangan has 7,967 registered voters, including 752 postal voters.

The State by-election was called following the death of Datuk Khor Liang Tee on Dec 19.

Khor, who died of colon cancer, had held the seat since 1990 after defeating Keadilan candidate Ko Chu Liang with a 1,974 majority in the general election.

In Alor Star, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad expressed hope the people would come out and vote without fear.

Dr Mahathir said he was informed the Opposition had brought in some 600 thugs to create trouble, but their plans were foiled by the heavy police presence.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi called on the people not to be afraid to come out and exercise their right to elect their representative.

"There will be no repeat of Lunas," he said, referring to the incident in the November 2000 Lunas by-election where Opposition supporters stopped buses from entering the Lunas constituency as they claimed the buses were carrying phantom voters.

Voters will go to the ballot box in seven schools which the Election Commission had gazetted as polling centres.

Ooi will be casting her vote at 8am at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sri Perlis. Khoo is not a registered voter in Indera Kayangan but will make an appearance at the same school an hour later.

The schools are SRJK (T) Kangar for Padang Katong polling area, Sekolah Menengah Syed Hassan (Derma), Sekolah Menengah Derma (Pekan Lama Kangar), Sek Ren Keb Putra (Pengkalan Assam), Sekolah Kebangsaan Sri Perlis (Pekan Baru Kangar), SRJK (C) Khoon Aik (Seberang Bakau) and Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Perlis (Ganding).

Since nomination day on Jan 10, Indera Kayangan, which is only about 20km square, has been deluged with thousands of outsiders from all over the country.

Often, workers from the opposing sides bump into one another. Residents have found themselves being approached by unfamiliar faces who give them so many promises.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, who is also the BN by-election director, claimed the aggressive campaign by Keadilan had caused the locals to experience a culture shock because the people in Kangar love peace and order.

Campaigning has not been a tame affair despite BN and Keadilan having promised to engage in a fair and clean campaign.

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