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Keng Yaik expects tough fight in Ketari by-election

BENTONG, Sun. - Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik today reiterated Ketari will be a hard seat to contest and called upon all Barisan Nasional component parties' members to give all they can to ensure a victory.

Speaking to reporters after meeting the Bentong division committee members here, he said the small majority managed by Gerakan against DAP in the 1999 general election should serve as a reminder not to take victory for granted.

He said the lack of co-ordination between component parties coupled with unresolved local issues could be among the causes why the majority dropped in 1999 compared with the 1995 general election.

"We will use the same formula of co-operation used by all BN component parties to clinch victory in the recent Indera Kayangan by-election," he said.

He said no new names were proposed and the candidacy was still between the four names suggested by the State Gerakan.

They are Ketari Gerakan branch chairman and a lawyer Yum Ah Ha, 51, Perting branch deputy chairman Dr Ng Kok Chai, 42 who is a dentist, Bandar Karak branch chairman Leong Yen Kong, 60, who is a Commissioner of Oaths and Sungai Dua branch chairman Leong Ah Khuan, 46, a logging operator.

Yum, however, is said to hold the edge over the rest based on his Kwangsi background as well his rapport with the locals.

Dr Lim said the final decision remained with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, whom he was expected to meet on Tuesday evening.

Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob, whom Gerakan has selected to head the BN campaign for the Ketari seat, is expected to announce the candidate here on Wednesday.

He said he would also meet Adnan tomorrow to discuss and find solutions to any outstanding issues with regards the voters in Ketari.

"While Adnan has done his best to resolve most issues highlighted by the people here, we do not want to leave anything outstanding," he said.

Dr Lim, who is Primary Industries Minister, said he had also got the greenlight from Dr Mahathir to cancel his overseas trip to Russia with the Prime Minister next week.

He has also rescheduled a Ministry palm oil mission to Syria, Egypt and Morocco.

The Gerakan president also cautioned voters against DAP's tactics in trying to fish for sympathy votes.

"We are confident the DAP will try to play on the sympathy of the voters by telling them that they (DAP) have lost this seat three times in a row and that they too deserve a fair chance to prove to the voters what they are capable of," he said.

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