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Minister: Translate love for PM into votes

KOTA KINABALU, Thurs. - Voters in the Anak Bukit and Pendang constituencies should translate their love for the Prime Minister and support for the Government by voting in the Barisan Nasional candidate in the coming by-election.

Umno vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the people were stunned when they heard that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was resigning as Umno president and from his government posts.

"The whole country was stunned and I believe it was the same for the people of Anak Bukit and Pendang. They were also shocked and realised the great contributions made by the Prime Minister for the country.

"We hope they translate that into votes to show their love for leaders and as a sign of support to the Government. This is the best time," he said.

He was asked if the recent announcement by Dr Mahathir to resign and to appoint Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to take over the helm of Umno and the Government would have an impact on the outcome of the by-election in both constituencies.

The Anak Bukit State constituency and the Pendang parliamentary seat fell vacant following the death of Pas president Datuk Fadzil Noor on Sunday.

"Maybe this is one factor which will be taken into consideration by voters. It is still fresh in their minds and it may have an impact on the result ... hopefully, it will be positive for the BN," he said.

However, Muhyiddin cautioned it would not be an easy task to wrest the seats from Pas as both were under the representation of Fadzil, who was party president.

"Pas may try to garner sympathy votes and we have to face the fact this will be a strong challenge for us. But if we plan correct strategies, it will be possible for us to win," he said.

Muhyiddin, who is Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister, was speaking to reporters after opening the Kota Kinabalu Consumer Claims Tribunal court at the Kuwasa building, here today.

He also said BN leaders have explained to the people issues such as the Islamic state concept and Pas' intention to introduce hudud in Terengganu.

"When campaigning starts, we will further explain to the grassroots these issues. We will explain to voters why they need to support the BN," he said.

He said the choice of BN candidates would be left to Dr Mahathir.

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