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Gaya-PBS

PBS VOWS FULL SUPPORT FOR BN CANDIDATE IN GAYA

KOTA KINABALU, Oct 1 (Bernama) -- Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) president Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan today expressed the party's full support for the Barisan Nasional's (BN) choice of candidate for the Gaya parliamentary by-election to be announced tomorrow.

He also called on party members in the constituency to come out in full force to vote for the BN candidate.

Speculation is rife that the potential BN candidate in Gaya -- held traditionally by the Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) -- could come from PBS but Pairin said it was just a speculation.

"I would like to take this opportunity to once again reiterate that PBS will give full and unequivocal support to whoever picked as the BN candidate by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as the BN head.

"We still have no idea who the candidate will be until it is properly and effectively announced," he told a news conference here.

He said the party had not proposed names for consideration by the top BN leadership.

"We have given our views and the final decision will be made by the BN leadership. As a party that has just returned to the BN fold, PBS knows its limits...we don't want what people say we are hard up or desperate for the seat," he said.

Asked on reports that the party had taken a nomination form for the by-election, Pairin said it could come from anybody claiming to represent the party.

"As far as the party is concerned, no instruction was given to anybody to pick up a nomination paper," he added.

The Gaya seat fell vacant when Datuk Yong Teck Lee was disqualified as its Member of parliament following an Election Court's decision in June last year that he committed corrupt practice under the Election Offences Act in the 1999 state election.

Yong won the seat in the 1999 general election with a majority of 4,117, defeating Johnny Goh of PBS and Hamzah Abdullah of PAS.

A total of 49,427 electorate are eligible to vote in the by-election. Nomination is on Thursday while polling will be on Oct 12 in the event of a contest.

-- BERNAMA

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