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PM to get BN candidates' list

Ainon Mohd

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The names of potential candidates for the July 18 Pendang parliamentary and Anak Bukit State by-elections will be given to Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in two or three days' time for a decision.

BN deputy chairman Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he had received the list of potential candidates and would brief Dr Mahathir on it. Abdullah, who is Umno deputy president, said this after chairing the Umno management committee meeting at the party headquarters here today.

He said the BN would ensure that its candidates were able to serve the people efficiently.

On whether the candidates are locals, he said: "Many of the locals are smart and talented. We want someone who can win the by-elections and serve the rakyat."

Abdullah, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, said although BN stood a good chance of winning the by-elections, its members must work hard.

"We hope that all State (Umno) liaison and committee members will work hard to ensure victory for BN. They must deliver."

Abdullah said the police had also given an assurance that voters would be able to exercise their right without fear during the by-elections.

Policemen will be deployed to maintain peace and public order.

Abdullah also advised all party leaders not "to go overboard" and to maintain decorum when campaigning and refrain from causing tension.

"The police will be on guard all the time. They are prepared to face any untoward incident. The police will take action if the need arises. I have been told that they will beef up security in the areas concerned."

On the committee meeting, Abdullah said the discussion was mainly on the party's preparations for the by-elections.

"We are streamlining the programmes of each movement. We have identified groups who can hold ceramah. They will be provided with sufficient information to counter (statements by) Pas."

On Pas' tactic to gain sympathy votes from the voters, Abdullah said Umno had its own way.

"The voters in the constituencies will be the ones who will decide (who to vote). Umno will go door to door."

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