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SAPP submits names of nominees for by-election

KOTA KINABALU, Tues. - The Sabah Progressive Party has sub-mitted names of nominees for the Gaya parliamentary by-election to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

SAPP president Datuk Yong Teck Lee said he submitted the names to Abdullah, who is Barisan Nasional deputy chairman, last night.

Yong said SAPP was hoping that it would be allowed to recontest the Gaya parliamentary seat.

"As a matter of procedure, we met the Deputy Prime Minister and briefed him on the situation," he said after attending a State BN meeting chaired by Abdullah.

"We stated our desire that the incumbent party be fielded on behalf of the BN."

Yong, whose disqualification as Gaya MP forced the by-election, said it was normal for the incumbent party to expect that it would be allowed to recontest the seat.

Abdullah said the name of the candidate would be announced by BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Yong was disqualified as Gaya MP following the Federal Court's decision to reject his application for leave to appeal against the Court of Appeal's ruling upholding the Election Court's finding that he had committed graft in the 1999 State election.

The Election Commission has fixed nomination for the by-election on Oct 3 and polling on Oct 12.

In the 1999 general election, Yong obtained 15,315 votes to defeat Johnny Goh of PBS, who polled 11,198 votes.

Asked if SAPP was prepared to accept if the candidate was not from the party, Yong said he accepted the statement by Abdullah that all component parties have agreed to support whoever was chosen as candidate.