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Najib-Evidence

UMNO HAS PROOF PAS HAS MOVED VOTERS, SAYS NAJIB

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 1 (Bernama) -- Umno-vice president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today the party has evidence that PAS has taken steps to move voters in constituencies in Kedah as a strategy to take over power in the state in the next general election.

He said this was exposed by the Kedah Umno Liaison Body through an investigation after the by-elections for the Anak Bukit State Assembly seat and Pendang Parliamentary seat in July.

"We (Umno) also have proof that PAS has issued certain instructions specifically to its supporters to carry out the movement of voters in a planned and proper manner based on an action plan to enable them to take over Kedah," he told reporters after launching the Serdang Puteri Umno division, near here.

Najib said this when asked to comment on the statement by Kedah PAS commissioner Azizan Abdul Razak yesterday denying Umno claims that the opposition party had retained the Anak Bukit state seat by using phantom voters.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting yesterday, had claimed that the PAS victory in the Anak Bukit by-election last month was made possible through the existence of phantom voters.

Najib said from the investigation, Kedah Umno found that 547 voters from four ballot boxes during the by-election were neither residents nor working in the area concerned but were outsiders who only emerged during polling day.

He said that based on this discovery, the party leadership had issued a directive to carry out investigations in the other states to determine the extent of this phenomenon.

"We will meet with the EC (Election Commission) when we have gathered evidence (to lodge an official protest)," he said.

Najib, who is also Defence Minister, said the PAS moves might have been aided by a small number of individuals in the EC.

"We (Umno) are not blaming the EC as an organisation, but there might be sympathisers at the lower levels of the EC who had cooperated with the (opposition) political parties to include their supporters and exclude our supporters," he said.

He said such acts could be detected following the failure of more than 1,000 registered voters, who had voted for Umno in the 1999 general election, to cast their votes during the recent by-election as their names were not in the list.

In addition, he said, there were weaknesses in the present electoral roll system with the EC only requiring the original kampung of the voter to enable the individual concerned to be registered.

"The EC accepts addresses based on the kampung stated, it is not based on the house and most voters rely on the kampung address and not the house address. Thus, it is difficult for us to trace when there is no specific address, and this is among the weaknesses which had occurred," he said.

At the function, about 2,000 Umno members were present to celebrate the launch of the Serdang Puteri Umno division which has more than 1,000 members.

-- BERNAMA

NM HS AO