

22 JAN 2004

Syed Razak-Mahathir

DR M GIVES NOD TO BE KEDAH BN ELECTION WORK PROGRAMME ADVISER - MB

ALOR STAR, Jan 22 (Bernama) -- Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has agreed to be the adviser for the election work programmes of the Kedah Barisan Nasional (BN) to help the ruling coalition win in the upcoming general election, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain said today.

He said the decision to appoint Dr Mahathir to the post was taken at the Kedah Umno liaison committee meeting in Kuala Lumpur on Jan 14.

"Dr Mahathir himself will launch the work programmes on Jan 31 at the Sultan Abdul Halim Stadium here," said Syed Razak, who is also Kedah BN Chief, told reporters after attending the State MCA Chinese New Year open house.

Syed Razak said Dr Mahathir would outline the election strategies at the gathering to be attended by about 1,200 BN leaders and members from all levels of the Kedah BN.

As the adviser, Dr Mahathir would visit every division in the state to meet the grassroots leaders.

"We believe Dr Mahathir's involvement and his role in the general election will be very meaningful to strengthen the BN election machinery.

"His vast experience is greatly needed," he said.

Syed Razak, who is also Kedah Umno Chairman, said he had instructed all the 15 Umno divisions in the state to submit 10 names to be considered as candidates in the election.

He said he would personally assess the qualities of the nominees based on certain criteria before selecting them as candidates.

He, however, said there was no guarantee that the candidates would be picked from among the 10 names proposed by the divisions.

The candidates could also come from those not listed, he said.

"The list is to provide an opportunity for every Umno division to

present its views on the choice of candidates.

"So far, there has been no list from me proposing candidates' names," he said.

Syed Razak said he would meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to get his views on the criteria set by the leadership to pick candidates before submitting the names to Umno headquarters.

He also said Abdullah would make a one-day working visit to Kedah on Feb 3.

He said Abdullah would meet government employees and Kedah BN component party leaders in the morning and address a meet-the-people session in the evening.

This is Abdullah's first visit to Kedah since becoming Prime Minister on Oct 31.

-- BERNAMA

MNH TOM