

Confirmed: PKR to contest in Ijok
Malaysiakini.com
April 9, 2007
Beh Lih Yi

Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) today confirmed that it will field the opposition candidate in the upcoming Ijok by-election in Selangor.

"However, we will not announce the name of the candidate so quickly, we will assess the situation first," said the opposition party's Selangor chief Khalid Ibrahim.

Although five names have been submitted to the top leadership, he said no final decision has been made.

It is learnt that among the possible candidates are several senior PKR leaders, including Khalid himself.

Another name proposed for the state seat, which has a sizeable number of Indian voters, is businessman S Nalakaruppan.

Nalakaruppan, a close associate of PKR advisor Anwar Ibrahim, joined the party last year and is expected to contest for vice-presidency during the party polls in May.

Meanwhile, Khalid said opposition parties DAP and PAS - both of which had given way to PKR to fight the by-election - will also help the party's campaign in Ijok.

As for the rationale in contesting in Ijok after boycotting January's Batu Talam by-election in Pahang in a bid to press for electoral reforms, Khalid said this was because the party felt it could initiate changes by taking part in the elections.

In a press statement later, he said that PKR has decided to move the voters to ask for a change through the ballots.

"We know we are playing in an uneven playing field but we have no choice but to face all difficulties," he said.

He also said that voters in Ijok had also pressed the party to contest in the by-election.

Date announcement on Wednesday

Meanwhile, Election Commission secretary Kamarulzaman Mohd Noor said the date for the Ijok by-election will be announced on Wednesday.

"The EC will meet on Wednesday 10am to discuss the matter," he said when contacted, adding that the commission has received the notice from the Selangor state assembly speaker.

The Ijok state seat fell vacant following the death of MIC incumbent K Sivalingam, 59, last Wednesday.

He was a three-term state assemblyperson for Ijok and a Selangor exco member. He was

also a MIC central working committee member.

In the last general election in 2004, PKR's Abdol Raman Moharam garnered 3,564 votes against Sivalingam's 5,213 votes.

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Source : <http://www.malysiakini.com/news/65665>