

Terengganu PAS won't boycott Kuala Besut polls

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Terengganu PAS has rejected DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng's suggestion to boycott the upcoming Kuala Besut by-election, as it is determined to wrest the state seat from BN.

parliament 170209 abdul wahid endutPAS will not give the BN an easy victory, said state commissioner Abdul Wahid Endut (left in photo).

"The issue of boycotting this by-election does not arise. Recently, some wanted to boycott the swearing-in (of MPs) in Parliament but eventually they took their oath. Hence, we will stick to our decision to field a candidate from PAS in Kuala Besut," Utusan Malaysia quoted him as saying at a press conference yesterday.

"We have also held a meeting and shortlisted potential candidates, as well as mobilised the machinery to make preparations."

Lim had suggested on Sunday that PAS should boycott the by-election to protest the Election Commission's (EC) lackadaisical attitude in addressing electoral fraud.

NONEPAS secretary-general Mustafa Ali then reportedly said that the Pakatan Rakyat presidential council would study the suggestion.

PAS ulama chief Harun Taib (right) has also reportedly shot down the proposal.

"Personally I think PAS should contest the Kuala Besut by-election and I don't think PAS will boycott because it (the suggestion) was from another party and it was his (Lim) view," he told the Malay daily.

"I would prefer PAS to contest ... we must fight. We have never given a free victory to BN."

On demands by some PKR leaders to give the seat to the party - since PAS has failed to capture it since 1999 - Abdul Wahid said the seat will stay with PAS.

"I have discussed this with (Terengganu PKR state chief) Azan Ismail and I think there is no problem with giving way to PAS as it (has contested the seat)," he was quoted as saying in Sinar Harian.

"I assure (you) that there will be no overlap (of Pakatan Rakyat candidates) except (if there is an) Independent."

YESTERDAY PKR Wanita election director Haniza Talha (left) had told Malaysiakini that the wing is ready to field a woman candidate if PAS has no suitable candidate.

However, PKR deputy president Azmin Ali said at the Parliament lobby yesterday that the PKR leadership has unanimously agreed to support PAS in contesting Kuala Besut.

Sinar Harian yesterday reported that the by-election may see a three-corner fight as former Terengganu PKR chief Mohd Padeli Jusoh has stated that he is ready to contest as an Independent should PAS refuse to give the seat to PKR.

He said the seat should be allocated to PKR as replacement for three state seats - Kota Putera, Bukit Besi and Seberang Takir - which PAS had contested in the 13th general election on May 5.

Shortlisted names

According to today's Sinar Harian, Abdul Wahid revealed that the party has identified several individuals to contest the seat.

Popular preacher Azhar Idrus, whose name has seen speculation in the media as a potential candidate, did not make it to the list.

Abdul Wahid explained that Azhar has no interest in contesting.

"He is from Ladang (an area in Kuala Terengganu city), a local. We receive much information that he is not very keen on contesting, but let us see later (whether he wants to contest or not), as (the decision) has yet to be finalised," he was quoted as saying.

Others shortlisted are Besut PAS division chief Wan Azhar Wan Ahmad and Napisah Omar, who had contested the seat in the May 5 general election but lost to Umno.

Most of the prospective candidates are locals and the party will select the best candidate, said Abdul Wahid.

He further announced that state deputy commissioner and Paka assemblyperson Satiful Bahri Mamat has been appointed as the state election director for the

by-election.

The BN has already appointed Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin as the national election director for the by-election, the first to be called after last month's general election.

The EC is expected to announce the nomination day and polling day after a special meeting on Friday.

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