

PKR to field Zaid if BN chose Palanivel
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PKR is "most likely" to field supreme council member Zaid Ibrahim in the Apr 25 Hulu Selangor parliamentary by-election if the BN names MIC deputy president G Palanivel as its candidate, according to party insiders.

NONEThey said PKR may change its candidate at the 11th hour if the BN decides not to field Palanivel.

"As for now, what I heard is that Zaid Ibrahim (right) still tops the list of being the best PKR candidate for the by-election. Zaid still carries 'national weight' despite being an outsider and is seen by PKR as the best candidate to challenge the BN.

"However, there could be a change (in the candidate) if the BN decides not to field Palanivel," one party insider told Bernama.

He felt that Zaid and Palanivel would be the ideal candidates as both had served the federal government administration.

NONEZaid, who was expelled from Umno in December 2008, was a minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of legal affairs and judicial reform while Palanivel (left) was the deputy minister of Women, Family and Community Development.

"It would be only appropriate if a Datuk fights a Datuk, a heavyweight fights a heavyweight," the insider said.

Another insider said fielding Zaid would be most favourable to PKR in light of the constituency's recent voting pattern.

"Zaid is a recognisable face. Everyone knows him and he is quite popular with the non-Malays as well. Furthermore, Zaid is seen as a principled politician, since he was willing to resign as a minister. People respect him for this," he said.

Meanwhile, sources claimed that PKR's intention to field Zaid reflected the party's anticipation that the BN would field a political heavyweight.

The Hulu Selangor seat fell vacant following the death of the Member of Parliament, Zainal Abidin Ahmad of PKR, on Mar 25.

In the 2008 general election, Zainal Abidin defeated Palanivel by a 198-vote majority. Hulu Selangor has 63,593 voters.

The BN has announced that it would nominate a candidate from the MIC to contest the seat.

The candidate is expected to be identified on Apr 15, two days before nomination for the by-election.

Speculation is rife that Palanivel, 61, who had been Hulu Selangor MP from 1990 to 2008, would be fielded once again as the BN candidate although there is some clamour for a younger candidate.

- Bernama

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