

Parties, police gear up for nomination
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Beh Lih Yi

Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Rakyat supporters have been told to exercise restraint during tomorrow's nomination for the Pematang Pauh by-election.
MCPX

The police have also beefed up security in the area.

syed hamid albar 170608 gesturingSpeaking to reporters in Penang today, Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar urged the campaigners not to provoke each other or do anything that could cause conflict during the nomination.

"If everyone takes responsibility, no untoward incidents will happen. Let us show our maturity in exercising a democratic process," he told a press conference at the Central Seberang Perai district police headquarters.

"Let me remind you, this is an ordinary by-election, not a general election or an election to change the government," he said, adding that supporters must not get emotional.

The minister was speaking to reporters after attending a briefing on the police's preparation for the nomination.

According to Syed Hamid, 3,000 police personnel, including those from the Federal Reserve Unit (FRU), will be deployed to ensure that the nomination process proceeds smoothly.

permatang pauh by election campaign posters and banners 150808 03He also said the police met with campaigners of both parties in advance to brief them on the traffic diversion to avoid any possible clashes between the supporters.

"They have agreed (to the police's plan) so I hope they will adhere to it. It's for the sake of an efficient rally for the by-election," he said, adding that the police are ready to face the worst.

The home minister also noted that a sum of RM4 million has been allocated as the expense for the police's operations during the 10-day campaign period.

Also present were Penang police chief Ayub Yaakob and Seberang Perai Central district police chief Dr Mohd Shah Hussin Shah.

Independent candidates?

At a separate function in Permatang Pauh today, Umno Youth chief Hishammuddin Hussein urged the wing's supporters to be disciplined and not to respond to their rival's 'aggressive' campaign.

permatang pauh by election campaign posters and banners 150808 06The nomination is scheduled to be held at the Tuanku Bainun Teachers' Training College from 9am to 10am tomorrow, to be followed by another hour allocated for any objection on the candidacy.

Ten days have been allocated for the election campaign, with polling fixed for Aug 26.

The upcoming contest is being touted as the 'mother of all by-elections' as it will mark the return of former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim after a 10-year hiatus from active politics.

The PKR de facto leader will be taking on BN's Arif Shah Omar Shah. It is not known whether any independent candidates will join in the race but a Chinese daily has reported that four copies of the nomination forms have been sold.

permatang pauh by election pre nomination day 150808 01A check by Malaysiakini at the nomination centre today found that the police have put up barbed wires and barricades at the field where supporters will gather to avoid any clashes.

More than 20 FRU trucks were also spotted outside a hotel in the neighbouring Perai district since yesterday.

Despite the police refusing to divulge their estimation of the crowd's number for tomorrow, reports have quoted party sources as estimating the number to reach about 20,000 in total.

The road leading to the nomination centre will be closed to traffic from 6am tomorrow until the nomination is over at about noon.

anwar ibrahim lim guan eng dap permatang pauh by election walkabout campaign 150808 01The police have also designated different entry roads for supporters, where the BN candidate will proceed first to the nomination centre through Jalan Mengkuang-Berapit from 7.30am.

This will be followed by Anwar via Jalan Kubang Semang-Mengkuang at 8am.

Pakatan Rakyat leaders such as DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat and president Abdul Hadi Awang are expected to be present to lend their support for the opposition icon.

The Pakatan leaders, together with Anwar and his wife Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, will lead a 1km-parade march towards the nomination centre.

arif shah omar shah bn umno candidate for permatang pauh by election 140808 14The BN front will be led by Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, Penang BN chief Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Umno Youth chief Hishammuddin Hussein and other big guns.

The Permatang Pauh seat fell vacant after its incumbent Wan Azizah vacated it on July 31 to allow her husband to contest.

There are 58,459 voters in the constituency, of which 490 are postal voters.