

**Najib : Umno division is united and ready for battle**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Aug 16, 2008**  
**Beh Lih Yi**

Umno deputy president Najib Abdul Razak has denied there is a split within the Permatang Pauh Umno division which may cost its victory in the MCPX Aug 26 by-election.

"No split. There have been differences in opinions but I'm so happy to say that party leaders in Permatang Pauh are closing ranks.

"They have made personal commitment to me that they will work very hard to ensure BN's success, so I thank them for it," he told reporters after the Permatang Pauh's by-election nomination in Penang today.

Najib, who is also the deputy premier, said the Umno divisional leaders have since closed ranks as they acknowledged there is nothing more important than a victory for BN in the by-election.

permatang pauh by election nomination day 160808 39Earlier, Najib led top BN leaders in accompanying BN candidate Arif Shah Omar Shah, who is also the Seberang Jaya state assemblyperson, to file his nomination paper at the Tuanku Bainun Teachers' Training College today.

The Aug 26 poll will see a three-cornered fight involving Arif Shah, PKR's Anwar Ibrahim and Hanafi Hamat, president of PAS splinter Angkatan Keadilan Insan Malaysia (Akim).

### **Vying for division chief**

There are fears of 'backstabbing' among the various factions competing for power at the division's election, scheduled to be held over the next two months.

Vying for the coveted division chief 'spost are the trio of Arif Shah, current chief Abdul Jalil Abdul Majid and his deputy Pirdaus Ismail.

Division leadership contests are highly charged as they determine the voting delegates at the Umno general assembly, to be held in December.

It is learnt that internal struggle in the Permatang Pauh division was one reason why the Umno leadership has great difficulty in the selection of candidate to take on Anwar.

Announcing Arif Shah as the BN's candidate earlier this week, Najib has repeatedly reminded party members to set aside internal politics while campaigning.

He also made it clear that the party's choice as candidate has no bearing on the divisional election.

**'Umno is never a racist'**

On the three-way contest, Najib said it would not make much of a difference nor change the prospect of the by-election.

pematang pauh by election nomination day 160808 06 "It would still be an uphill task for BN but nothing is impossible in politics".

"We would like to be underdog," he quipped in reference to Anwar being touted the firm favourite to win.

Najib also denied BN will launch a 'racist campaign' as alleged by Anwar.

"We have never been racist, Umno is never a racist party and we will never be racist. Umno is a party for all Malaysians," he stressed.

On the smaller crowd of BN supporters today as compared to PKR's, Najib was unfazed, saying that BN has won previous elections with small crowds.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/87954>