

**Galas by-election: BN will field best candidate, says Najib**  
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PUTRAJAYA - Najib Abdul Razak said Friday the Barisan Nasional (BN) would definitely field a candidate in the upcoming Galas state by-election in Kelantan.

The prime minister said the coalition would put up the best candidate possible.

"It is difficult for us not to contest the seat. Democratic practice provides for a by-election in the event an electoral seat falls vacant due to death (of the incumbent elected representative)," he told reporters after visiting a government hospital design competition exhibition at the Finance Ministry, here.

"Only once did we not contest a seat, when it was vacated on purpose, because we felt that it would be a waste of money," he said in reference to the by-election in the Permatang Pauh parliamentary constituency in Aug 2008.

Najib said that in Galas, there was a need to fill the vacancy for an elected representative.

"If we do not contest, then the Galas constituents will have no choice. If we contest, they will have the option of picking BN or PAS. That's the healthy democratic practice we have in our country," he said.

PAS had expressed the desire for the BN not to contest the seat, saying it would help prevent a wastage of money.

Asked about the appointment of Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah as the BN election director for the by-election, Najib said: "I am delighted that he is willing and he is committed to work hard to ensure the BN wins."

"We are not going to talk about the candidate at this stage. I am still waiting for the list of possible candidates. I don't want to pre-empt who the candidate will be but we want to put up the best possible candidate," he said.

The Galas seat, which is in the Gua Musang parliamentary constituency, fell vacant following the death of the assemblyman, Che Hashim Sulaima, 46, on Monday from colon cancer. In the general election in 2008, Che Hashim won the seat with a majority of 646 votes.

Besides Galas, the Nenggiri and Paloh state seats are also in the Gua Musang parliamentary constituency.

Asked about the so-called momentum created by the opposition to take over Putrajaya, Najib said: "It is their business to create this and it is our business to create the momentum on our side because sometimes they create a false momentum.

"As you know, two years ago, they said they are going to walk into Putrajaya and it never happened. It is the Sept 16 fiasco on their part. Don't forget, they can even create a false sense that things are moving in their direction.

"But whatever it is, it is important for the BN to work hard and gain the confidence of the people." - Bernama

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