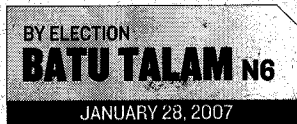


Stage set for straight fight between Barisan and PAS

The Star - 9/1/2007

KUALA LUMPUR: The stage is set for a straight fight between the Barisan Nasional and PAS in the upcoming Batu Talam by-election, following a decision by Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) not to put up a candidate.

PKR, instead, will back PAS. The other major opposition party, the DAP, had already announced it was not interested in the seat, which fell



vacant following the death of incumbent Datuk Tengku Paris Tengku Razlan.

Nomination day for the by-election is Jan 16 while balloting will be on Jan 28.

Pahang PKR said in a

statement yesterday it would focus on areas with non-Malay voters and places considered Barisan strongholds.

In the 2004 general elections, Tengku Paris, who died of cancer on Dec 27, gave the Barisan victory over PAS, garnering 5,414 votes.

His rival, Mohamed Nilam Abdul Manap, polled 2,653 votes.