

BN ready for by-election

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It is confident of retaining Batu Talam

KUANTAN: Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Barisan Nasional (BN) and Umno are ready for a by-election in the Batu Talam state constituency. The seat fell vacant following the death of assemblyman, Tengku Datuk Paris Tengku Razlan, on Wednesday.

The deputy prime minister said yesterday he believed that Umno could retain the seat based on its experience and strength in the constituency.

The Umno Management Committee would coordinate the party's preparations for the by-election and there was no need to hold a special meeting because the committee met weekly and any decision relating to the by-election could be made then, he told reporters here.

Meanwhile, in Raub, Tengku Paris, 66, who died of rectal

cancer, was buried at the Kampung Tok Machang and Ulu Gali Muslim cemetery at 11.30am yesterday.

At the funeral were his wife Raja Datin Noraziah, Raja Yunan, children Tengku Saiful Bahari, 39, Tengku Shahrizan, 36, Tengku Hairul Niza, 33, Tengku Nazatul Shima, 30, twins Tengku Ahmad Farid and Tengku Aziati, 27, and close relatives.

The prayers were conducted by Raub district Islamic Affairs officer Khairul Amran Abdul Jalil.

Also present were Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob, state assembly speaker Datuk Wan Mohamad Razali Wan Mahusin, Puteri Umno chief Datuk Noraini Ahmad, state executive councillors and assemblymen.

Tengku Hairul Niza, when met by reporters, said her

father had still cared about his constituents despite his illness.

"He was disappointed that he could not serve the people after he fell sick last year," she said.

Wan Mohamad Razali said Tengku Paris was a dedicated assemblyman and attended the last state assembly sitting and took part in the debates despite his illness.

Election Commission (EC) secretary Datuk Kamaruzaman Mohd Nor said a by-election can be held two years prior to the maturity of the state legislative assembly.

"In this case the next general election is scheduled to be held by May 17, 2009, so there is still time to conduct a by-election," he said yesterday.

He said election rules state that a by-election has to be held within 60 days of the death of an elected representative. — Bernama