

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	26 FEBRUARY 2015

Umno to give Chempaka a miss

Not- 26/2/2015

KUALA LUMPUR: Umno will not contest in the Chempaka by-election, says party president Datuk Seri Najib Razak last night.

Najib, who is also prime minister, said the decision was made unanimously during the party's supreme council meeting. He cited three reasons for the party not contesting the Kelantan state seat.

"Firstly, we want to concentrate on post-flood rehabilitation and welfare efforts. These are ongoing, and a lot has to be done. There are still many who have yet to receive aid. As of now, that is our top priority.

"Secondly, we need to look into efforts to promote unity among the people (*perpaduan ummah*). Although we may differ in opinions or political views, we need to prioritise unity.

"Thirdly, it (the by-election) is not a necessity, depending on the circumstances. This is not unprecedented, as we did not contest Bukit Gelugor (after the death of DAP chairman Karpal Singh)," Najib said after chairing Umno's supreme council meeting.

The prime minister said the decision was made after deliberations with the party's top leadership, as well as its liaison body in Kelantan.

"Umno will not contest there. Anyone else (or independents) can



Umno president **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** and deputy president **Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin** at a press conference after the supreme council meeting yesterday. Pic by Aizuddin Saad

do so, if they wish."

The Chempaka by-election, which will be held on March 22, was called after the death of Pas spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat.

The former Kelantan menteri besar, who suffered from prostate cancer, died on Feb 12, aged 84.

On the Permatang Pauh parliamentary by-election, Najib said as

opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had submitted a petition to seek a royal pardon, Barisan Nasional would wait for the outcome of the application.