

Najib meets leaders from BN component parties to discuss line-up
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PETALING JAYA: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has started to meet Barisan Nasional component party leaders to finalise the list of candidates for the coming general election.

It is learnt that the Prime Minister cum Barisan Nasional chairman met the presidents of MCA and MIC as well as heads of the Sarawak parties to discuss the list yesterday.

Najib met them separately to discuss the names in the list, according to sources.

Sabah and Sarawak Barisan officials also confirmed yesterday that the component parties have handed their list of candidates to Najib for the 222 parliament and 505 state seats.

Sarawak only gave a list of names for 31 parliament seats as it held its elections for 71 state seats last year.

Liberal Democratic Party president Datuk Liew Vui Keong said he submitted his party's list of candidates recently to Najib in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Barisan Nasional secretary-general Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor.

Parti Bersatu Sabah secretary-general Datuk Henrynus Amin said PBS president Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan submitted his list last month.

Tengku Adnan, who is also the Umno secretary-general, said the party headquarters has so far contacted about a third of the 191 Umno divisions to get their feedback on shortlisted candidates.

"What our Umno president wants are candidates the *rakyat* want. So, we need to check and counter-check the names submitted by the divisions.

"Sometimes, the names are that of people we don't know. So, we need to ask the Umno divisions to explain further," he said.

Umno disciplinary committee deputy chairman Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas said that the party should announce the names of selected candidates a fortnight before nomination day to prevent acts of sabotage by those not selected.

He said the practice of naming candidates just before nominations gave Umno too little time to close ranks.

Megat Najmuddin hoped the candidate selected would be appointed as head of their respective local election machinery instead of the usual practice of getting the Umno division chief to lead it.

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