

**Najib Challenged By PKR Central Leadership Council Member  
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PEKAN, April 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is defending his Pekan Parliamentary seat, will be challenged by the Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) candidate, Fariz Musa in the general election on May 5. The announcement on the straight fight between Najib and the PKR Central Leadership Council member was made by the Returning Officer, Datuk Mohd Fadzli Mohd Kenali at 10.45am. Najib, who is also the Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, had earlier submitted his nomination papers at the Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Convention Hall at 9.08am to defend the Parliamentary seat which he has held since 1976. Najib, who was accompanied by about 5,000 BN supporters carrying banners and flags of the component parties, walked in a procession from the Pekan Umno building and arrived at the nomination centre at 9.06am.

Wearing a blue-coloured 'Baju Melayu', he entered the hall with the other BN candidates and became the first of the BN candidates to submit his nomination papers.

Other BN candidates standing for State Legislative Assembly seats in the Pekan Parliamentary constituency are Khairudin Mahmud who is contesting the Pulau Manis state seat, Datuk Sh Mohmed Puzi Sh Ali (Peramu Jaya), Mohd Fakhruddin Mohd Aris (Bebar) and Datuk Abu Bakar Harun (Chini).

Meanwhile, the opposition candidates led by Fariz, 43, who hails from Marang, Terengganu, arrived at the centre at 8.50am accompanied by about 500 supporters carrying flags of the opposition parties and banners.

Supporters of both parties contesting in the Parliamentary and state constituencies shouted their slogans but no undesired incidents were reported. Shouting 'Hidup PM, Hidup BN', the BN supporters also sang the patriotic song 'Barisan Kita' while the opposition supporters shouted 'Allahu Akbar' (God is great).

In the 2008 general election, Najib defeated the PKR candidate, Khairul Anuar Ahmad Zainudin with a majority of 26,464 votes. Najib garnered 36,262 votes while Khairul Anuar had 9,798.

The weather this morning was fine and police provided security to ensure smooth traffic flow around the nomination centre.

Najib became the Pekan Member of Parliament in 1976 after his father, who was the second prime minister and Member of Parliament for Pekan, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein died.

Since then, Najib remained as the elected representative for the constituency except for the period he became Pahang Menteri Besar between 1982 and 1986. Najib was then the State Assemblyman for Bandar Pekan.

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