

Eight Umno Division Chiefs In Johor Gearing Up For Face-Off

Bernama

12 Sept, 2013

JOHOR BAHRU, Sept 12 (Bernama) -- At least eight Umno division chiefs in Johor will be challenged in party polls while seven other divisions will elect new chiefs as the incumbents are stepping down.

On the other hand, Pagoh Umno division chief Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Semberong division chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein and Pasir Gudang division chief Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin are expected to retain their posts uncontested.

Batu Pahat division chief Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi, who was former deputy education minister, is likely to square off with his predecessor, Siam Kasrin, former member of parliament for Batu Pahat, who is keen to make a comeback after being in the political wilderness.

Pulai division chief Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed is seeing another battle with former Kempas assemblyman Datuk Osman Sapian, who indicated this when contacted.

Kluang division deputy chief Radzali Mohd Noor has announced his decision to unseat division chief Mohd Jais Sarday who is also state education and entrepreneur development committee chairman.

Simpang Renggam division chief Datuk Abdul Hamid Abdul Rahman is defending his post in a five-cornered fight, the most crowded race if it were to happen.

Gelang Patah division chief Datuk Abdul Aziz Sapian is expected to face his deputy, Dr Zaini Abu Bakar who is also Nusajaya assemblyman, and political secretary to Johor menteri besar Johor Khairy Malik.

Bakri division chief Datuk Saipolbahari Suib and Sekijang division chief Datuk Baharum Mohamed are expected to be pitted against their deputies, namely Datuk Mazlan Sabari and Datuk Ayub Rahmat respectively.

Segamat division chief Datuk Othman Jais is expected to be challenged by Puteri division chief Norshida Ibrahim who is also Buloh Kasap assemblyman.

Division chiefs who have decided not to defend their posts are Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar (Kota Tinggi), Datuk Baderi Dasuki (Tenggara), Datuk Mohd Ismail Mohd Shah (Muar), former Johor menteri besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman (Ledang) and Datuk Ahmad Zahri Jamil (Parit Sulong).

Sri Gading division chief Datuk Mohamad Aziz has indicated that he would make way for his deputy, Datuk Abdul Aziz Kaprawi, who is also deputy transport minister, to take over.

Johor Umno has 26 divisions.

In Shah Alam, Selangor Umno Selection Committee chairman Tan Sri Abu Hassan Omar said the remaining 400 out of 2,297 branches, which were eligible to hold delegates' meeting, had until Sept 15 to do so.

He said the committee received 18 complaints ranging from insufficient quorum, meetings conducted not according to schedule and branches not holding any meeting except for an Aidilfitri open house.

If the allegations are found to be true, the affected branches will have to hold their delegates' meeting again for violation of procedure and the Umno constitution, he told reporters after chairing the committee's meeting here on Thursday.

He said if the allegations were unfounded, representatives from the concerned could take part in Wanita, Youth and Puteri divisional polls on Oct 12 and the division polls on Oct 19.

He said about 3,000 candidates from 22 Umno divisions in the state would register at the Umno Selangor building the day from 9am to 5pm on Sept 21 with the assistance of the committee and about 100 community college students. The registration forms will be distributed on Saturday.

The national level selection committee will conduct a course on the party polls in Janda Baik, Pahang from Sept 27 to 29.

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