

Gerakan President Is BN's Candidate For Teluk Intan By- Election
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TELUK INTAN, May 17 (Bernama) -- Gerakan president Datuk Mah Siew Keong has been named as Barisan Nasional's (BN) candidate for Teluk Intan parliamentary by-election scheduled for May 31.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin when making the announcement here today, said the 53-year-old former Member of Parliament for the constituency was the right choice as he had been in politics for quite some time and was not a stranger for the voters in Teluk Intan.

"He knows the people here. Although he lost during the last general election, I think this is the revival of Gerakan," he told reporters after announcing BN candidate and launching BN election machinery for the by-election here today.

Teluk Intan-born Mah, was first elected as the member of Parliament for the parliamentary constituency in 1999 before being re-elected in 2004.

Mah, who is also former Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister, graduated with a Bachelor of Science from the London School of Economic and Master's degree from City University London, as well as a law degree from University of East, London.

The Teluk Intan by-election is being called following the death of incumbent Seah Leong Peng, 48, of cancer on May 1.

Muhyiddin also expressed hope that the voters in Teluk Intan, who numbered over 60,000, would give another chance to Mah to represent them as he was a well-know candidate who knew the issues and problems faced by the people.

"We believe that at the state level, and under the leadership of Menteri Besar (Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir), it would be easier if the people's elected representatives were from BN.

"(As) Mah is contesting at the Parliamentary-level, the ties between the state and federal government will be strengthened, and this will give him the advantage to overcome the problems faced by the people here," he said.

When asked about BN's chances to win back the seat, which was won by DAP in the last general election with 7,313 vote-majority, Muhyiddin said:

"I think if BN machinery were able to meet with each voter, we can win this."

He said based on the results of the last general election, BN had identified its strengths and weaknesses in every district polling centres.

"We have set a realistic Key Performance Indicators (KPI) so that the party machinery at each level knows the final goal and how many voters they have to get in the area," he said.

On Chinese support, Muhyiddin said BN hoped to see an obvious change in the trend as shown by voters in the Kajang state by-election.

"(In Kajang) there is a positive shift in terms of Chinese support for the new MCA leadership under Liow (MCA president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai), I expect the same to happen here, even though I know it is somewhat a challenge," he said.

On DAP's decision to field a woman, Dyana Sofya Mohd Daud, as its candidate for the Teluk Intan by-election, Muhyiddin said:

"I don't want to undermine the opposition's candidate because some quarters may accuse us of denying the women (of their rights)"

Earlier in his speech, Muhyiddin, who is also BN deputy chairman, said the by-election would become another platform for the opposition to make allegations and raising issues, including of the economy, cost of living and the goods and services tax (GST).

However, he said all issues would be explained and clarified in details to the people so that they would not fall for the lies and dirty tactics of the opposition.

In the 13th general election, Seah won the seat in a three-corner fight against Mah and independent candidate Moralingam Kannan.

The nomination for the by-election is set on May 19, while early voting on May 27.

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