

Muhyiddin Proves His Mettle As Permatang Pauh, Rompin Parliamentary By-election Director

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By Nur Adila Abdul Wahab

BUTTERWORTH, May 4 (Bernama) -- It is not easy being the director of two by-elections, in places which are almost 700 kilometres apart, ensuring the smooth flow of operations.

Nonetheless, Deputy Chairman of Barisan Nasional (BN) Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has successfully shouldered the responsibilities of director of the by-elections for the Permatang Pauh, Penang, and Rompin, Pahang parliamentary seats.

Dividing his time well between the two constituencies, the deputy prime minister played his role with fairness without neglecting voters in either town.

To further ensure the smooth flow of the by-elections, Muhyiddin has appointed two Umno vice-presidents, Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein as joint by-election directors in Permatang Pauh and Rompin respectively.

Another Umno vice-president, Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal has been appointed BN coordinator for both the by-elections.

Muhyiddin has been visiting Permatang Pauh and Rompin on alternate days, traveling to and fro between both places.

In Permatang Pauh, his programme includes meetings with people from all levels of society, in every corner of the parliamentary constituency, showing BN's commitment to garnering the people's support for BN candidate Suhaimi Sabudin as the new elected representative.

Constantly emphasising that BN was the underdog in Permatang Pauh, Muhyiddin likens the challenge that the party was facing in the by-election as an "uphill task".

"I know this is not an easy task...we are the underdogs, and as the underdog, we know that we are facing an uphill task.

"But I am confident because in BN, the operations are solid, there is no split in the Umno division, whether in terms of the operations or candidate. We know we are moving as one team," he said after the nomination process of the Permatang Pauh by-election candidate at the Institut Kemahiran Belia Negara, Berapit, near here on April 25.

Bearing in mind BN's capabilities to make history in the PKR stronghold, Muhyiddin constantly stressed that all the BN component parties especially Umno must be united without any sabotaging and to focus on winning the parliamentary seat on May 7.

Muhyiddin also stressed that the internal strife between DAP, PAS and PKR should not be

exploited to boost BN's strength in the by-election, but focus should be on clarifying issues raised by the opposition parties and former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The deputy prime minister said the main focus of the BN machinery was on issues raised by the people in both constituencies, including the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Muhyiddin had earlier directed the enforcement bodies to take immediate action to resolve issues which arose during the implementation of the GST.

The Permatang Pauh by-election sees a four-cornered fight between Suhaimi, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail (PKR), Azman Shah Othman from Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM), and Independent candidate Salleh Isahak.

The by-election on May 7 is being held following the decision by the Pardons Board to reject the application for a royal pardon made by its incumbent Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim through his family members, resulting in the PKR leader losing his eligibility as its elected representative.

Anwar is serving a five-year jail term for sodomising his former personal assistant, Mohamad Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

Meanwhile, the Rompin by-election which will be held tomorrow, sees BN candidate Datuk Hasan Arifin being challenged by PAS candidate Nazri Ahmad to fill the vacancy in the Parliamentary seat following the death of its incumbent Tan Sri Dr Jamaluddin Jarjis in a helicopter crash in Semenyih, Selangor, on April 4.

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