

WWII Veteran Receives Surprise Visit from DPM

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SUNGAI BESAR, June 5 (Bernama) -- World War II veteran Sabran Asfar, 97, never in his wildest dreams expected to receive a visit from the Number Two leader of the country.

And that was exactly what happened when Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi came a calling at his home in Kampung Sri Sentosa in Sekinchan here today.

Ahmad Zahid handed over some Ramadan necessities to the spritely old veteran whose wife died eight years ago.

Sabran is among the elderly voters in Sungai Besar which will be witnessing a by-election on June 18.

"I was a soldier during the Japanese occupation (of Malaya during WWII) and my job was to guard people in the towns.

"I am deeply touched and thank very much the people who arranged the TPM's (Deputy Prime Minister's) visit and the kind gesture to provide Ramadan supplies," said Sabran, who hails from Bagan Serai, Taiping, Perak but has settled down here.

The Ramadan supplies were a contribution from Sungai Besar UMNO.

Ahmad Zahid was accompanied by Sungai Besar UMNO chief Datuk Jamal Md Yunos.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also UMNO vice president but carrying out the duties of the deputy president following the suspension of Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin from the post, was in town to lend support to the Barisan Nasional team during the nomination process for the by-election today.

Ahmad Zahid's next stop was the home of Misnah Hussin, 68, who has health problems and whose home was not far from Sabran's.

Misnah, who was a volunteer in the People's Volunteer Corps for more than 20 years, said she was very touched that the deputy prime minister was so humble and had the "people's touch".

"It is so good of him to come. Mak cik (auntie) hopes more such programmes will be held

for the leaders to get closer to the people," said Misnah, who has six children, 20 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Ahmad Zahid also spent time with Barisan Nasional election machinery and mingling with the locals, mostly made up of Malays of Javanese and Banjarese descent, and suprising them with his proficiency of Javanese.

Ahmad Zahid's delegation included former local rock music legend of the famous Lefthanded band Datuk Jamaludin Elias better known as Nash and Datuk Malik Rizuan who is famous for the hit 'Kelip-kelip Ku Sangka Api', who played a few numbers to entertain the crowd.

Besides the Sungai Besar by-election, the Kuala Kangsar by-election will also be held on June 18.

The by-elections were were called after the incumbents Deputy Plantation and Commodities Minister Tan Sri Noriah Kasnon (Sungai Besar) and Datuk Wan Mohammad Khair-il Anuar Wan Ahmad (Kuala Kangsar) were killed in helicopter crash in Sebuyau, Sarawak, on May 5.

The Sungai Besar seat is a three-cornered fight involving BN, PAS and Amanah while it is a four-cornered fight for Kuala Kangsar with the BN challenged by PAS, Amanah and an Independent.

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