

19/10/1998

Avoid complacency, Barisan parties told

JOHOR BARU, Sun. - Barisan Nasional component parties have been urged to have their election machinery ready as the Opposition parties are out to deny the coalition a two-thirds majority in the next general election.

BN secretary-general Datuk Seri Mohamed Rahmat also called on component parties not to be complacent, in view of the losses suffered by the coalition in recent by-elections.

"We lost in the Teluk Intan and Arau by-elections. With the existing economic and political problems, the Opposition, especially the DAP, think they can win more seats.

"Even Pas, which won the Arau by-election, thinks that the existing political climate favours them. They are all out to win more seats as they regard their achievement in the Arau by-election a good indicator.

"Despite these setbacks, BN remains strong and stable," he told reporters after attending Deepavali celebrations at 'Little India' in Jalan Ungku Puan last night.

Mohamed, who is Information Minister, said the BN was confident of retaining the two-thirds majority as the people were satisfied with its efforts to steer the country out of the economic problems.

In Kuala Lumpur, Gerakan today said the party concurred with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the BN would still be able to form the Government in the next general election, although with a smaller majority.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said the economic situation and the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim might have some effect on the election results.

He said if the people knew the actual political situation in the country there would not be any confusion.

"It will take some time to explain. The true picture will surface when the court case comes up," Dr Lim said.

In Muar, MCA vice-president Datuk Chua Jui Meng today also concurred with Dr Mahathir's views on the BN's ability to retain power in the next general election.

Chua said MCA leaders and members should, however, not be lulled into complacency, but must work harder to meet the needs and aspirations of the people.

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