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Lim-BN

BN IS HERE TO STAY, SAYS KENG YAIK

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 18 (Bernama) -- The Gerakan today said it shares Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's optimism that the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition will again be returned to power in the next general election although with a possible reduced majority.

Its president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said current issues like the economic slowdown and removal of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from the government and Umno may cause a section of the electorate to vote for the opposition.

"However I'm confident that the people will mostly give the mandate again to the BN which has proven its ability to run the country since the past 41 years," he said.

Speaking to reporters after delivering a luncheon address at the CEO Forum here, Lim said he did not expect a general election to be called soon given the number of unsettled national issues.

Lim said he was convinced that supporters of Anwar's so-called reform movement would get back to support the government again once they have been given sufficient explanation.

"They are still confused as they can't differentiate between actions which are political in nature and those relating to judicial powers," he said.

Lim said it was Dr Mahathir's indisputable prerogative as head of government and Umno president to sack Anwar from the Cabinet and party respectively without having to wait for a court decision.

Anwar was sacked as deputy prime minister and finance minister last Sept 2 and expelled from Umno the next day.

Lim described Anwar's resorting to street demonstrations upon expulsion from Umno as irrational whereas he (Lim) himself did not do such thing upon being expelled from the MCA in 1973.

Lim, who is also Primary Industries Minister, confirmed that certain foreign companies had cancelled their palm oil contracts following recent imposition of currency controls by Bank Negara.

He said their hasty decision arose from the misconception that all palm oil contracts in ringgit would be affected following the imposition of the measures.

-- BERNAMA

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