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`Gear up for bigger victory'

MALACCA, Sun. - Barisan Nasional leaders were today told to beef up their election machinery to ensure a bigger majority win in the general election.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the BN could achieve a tremendous victory provided all component parties worked hard.

"I am confident victory will be ours but all of us must start working hard," he said.

Abdullah, who is also Foreign Minister, was asked to comment on the statement by Umno president and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the BN will win the next election, although it may not have such a big majority.

Abdullah, who is co-chairman of Umno management and disciplinary committee, said Dr Mahathir's statement was a challenge to all component parties to strive harder.

"Victory with a bigger majority means a lot to the Government. We must have that kind of support in Parliament so that legislations can be passed to help the people.

"If we do not have that, we definitely will not be able to assist them. In certain countries, parliamentarians fight among themselves.

"And if this happens in this country, our Parliament will just become a political playground, not a venue where we can pass laws to help the people."

He was speaking after launching the Selandar parliamentary election machinery.

Also present were Selandar BN election chairman, Datuk Hamdin Abdullah, Selandar MIC chief, Datuk R. Raghavan, who is also Bukit Asahan Assemblyman, Selandar MCA chief, Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn, who is also Deputy Education Minister, State Umno liaison deputy chief, Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam, who is also Deputy Transport Minister and a few State Executive councillors.

Earlier, Abdullah said the BN would continue to project its image as model of unity and solidarity to the various ethnic groups in the country.

"Malaysia is in fact the best model (of unity and solidarity) for other countries. Despite the many races, we continue to live in peace and harmony unlike some war-stricken countries.

"The people should be grateful and appreciate this situation. It is not easy to achieve this but the political will of the leadership has made it so."

Abdullah also said the New Economic Policy formulated by the Government was actually a "reformation policy" which had succeeded in uniting the people and ensuring fair distribution of wealth," he added.

"The Government has been carrying out reformation all along and reforms are aimed at helping the people. The people must have confidence in the Government and its leaders."

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