

23 NOV 1998

Ling-Internet

POLITICAL PARTIES STILL NEED TO GO TO THE GROUND

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 23 (Bernama) -- Political parties still need to go to the ground to deliver their message to the people in the next general election despite the Internet expected to be widely used in the election campaign, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

"I think every organisation has its own website, including political parties. It will not be the only instrument to be used. The normal method of face to face contact will also be used because it has proven to be effective," he told reporters after opening the Malaysia International Motor Show '98 here.

He was commenting on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday that the BN was not discounting the possibility of using the Internet in campaigning for the next general election.

Dr Ling, who is Transport Minister, also said that not everyone have access to personal computers in the country.

"You still have to go to the markets and talk to the people and conduct ceramahs," he said.

On MCA's campaign for the election, he said while it was an on-going process, the party would intensify its campaign.

"We have never stop campaigning. The campaign for the next election starts from the day you finish your last election," he said.

Dr Ling also welcomed Dr Mahathir's statement yesterday that the real strength of the nation lies in the hands of the people and not street demonstrators.

"I think that is true because why get emotional when you should concentrate on strengthening your arguments, not raise your voice. Because by raising your voice you may not have stronger arguments," he said.

Meanwhile, Gerakan welcomed the suggestions by Dr Mahathir and Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik that the BN utilise information technology and the Internet to disseminate its views to the public.

"Although the system already exists, it needs serious upgrading and fine-tuning to make it more interesting, captivating and user-friendly," its Central Committee member, Dr S. Vijayarajam, said in a statement here.

He said the opposition parties and other interest groups, realising the potential of the Internet, had gone way ahead in making full use of the facility to propagate their ideologies and stand on several issues.

"All major Barisan parties have their own home page. A first step will be to have complementary inter-links amongst these," he added.

-- BERNAMA

RV RM