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Mahathir-Election

DR MAHATHIR CONFIDENT OF SMOOTH POLLS

PUTRAJAYA, Nov 18 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today assured the people that the Nov 29 general election will proceed smoothly although he anticipates certain quarters will use thugs to try creating trouble before the polls.

The Prime Minister said the security forces were capable to handle the situation and would act firmly to thwart any such plans.

"We anticipate attempts by the Opposition to disrupt the smooth conduct of the election especially a few days before polling on realising they have a slim chance to win," he told a meeting of local mass media editors at his office, here.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob was present.

Dr Mahathir said the Opposition would hurl all sorts of accusations a few days before polling to arouse the anger of their supporters against the Barisan Nasional (BN) including alleging that this election was not being conducted fairly and equitably.

He said the government also expected the Opposition to engage gangsters to disrupt BN ceramahs and campaigns.

Nevertheless, the people should not be scared to come out to vote as the security forces were not only prepared and in fact were capable to deal with any eventuality, he said.

Dr Mahathir said his fear on the possibility of attempts to interrupt the smooth running of the election stemmed from the presence of an individual with the Opposition this time and the returning to Malaysia of a staunch supporter of the individual.

He said in 1974, this "person" who had then yet to join the government, was responsible for causing rioting by instigating students to demonstrate on streets to oppose the government.

Besides that, the "person's" loyal supporter, who fled the country after leading the student demonstrations in 1974, returned to Malaysia recently and was involved in street demonstrations in the federal capital.

"The situation returned to normal after the "person" was in government. As soon as he was no longer in government, he again started anti-government demonstrations," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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