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Election-Khalil
KHALIL SAYS BN CAN MAINTAIN TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob has rated the chances of the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition retaining its two-thirds majority in the coming general election as very good.

Khalil, who has been named as BN's director of operations for the general election, said the coalition had conducted its "election dry run" to analyse the situation on the ground.

"Our interpretation of a winning margin is a two-third majority," he told reporters while waiting for the press conference by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the dissolution of parliament at the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya.

The Umno-led 14-member coalition controls 166 of the 192 seats in the Dewan Rakyat, which would be dissolved tomorrow to pave the way for the country's 10th general election.

Dr Mahathir named Khalil as the BN director of operations for the polls when asked about it during the press conference.

Khalil, who is also Umno secretary-general,said he believed local issues would dominate campaigning in most of the areas in the run-up to the election.

"People in an area like Jerantut are more interested in the development of Jerantut....problems faced in the Klang Valley will not be the same as those in the rural areas," he said.

The BN's strategy would be to respond to these problems, he said.

Asked if the election this time would make a bigger impact on the electorate with the use of the Internet, he said it was befitting "because this is the last election before the new millennium".

"You may have the gadget but eventually you have to rely on human aspects...going round campaigning," he said.

On election news coverage, he said the foreign press were free to come, observe and write.

"We want to show our transparency...we don't want to have like what the Malay saying says +Rumah sudah siap, pahat berbunyi+ (the chisel starts to sound only after a house gets completed)," Khalil added.

-- BERNAMA
AZZ RYN