

25 JUL 1999

Fadzil-Election

PAS ASKS DR M TO GIVE EARLY NOTICE ON POLLS

ALOR GAJAH, July 25 (Bernama) --- PAS president Datuk Dr Fadzil Noor has challenged Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to give early notice of when the next general election will be called for, saying that is the normal practice in other democracies.

"Other democratic countries, when they want to hold general elections, make the announcement six months earlier, one year earlier (but) Dr Mahathir does not dare to (do the same)," he said at a PAS ceramah in Sungai Putat near here last night.

He said giving an early notice would be fair to all contesting parties, enabling them to prepare for the polls.

Fadzil said opposition parties only got to know the actual timing of the election on the eve of the dissolution of parliament, and they were only allowed to campaign for a brief period.

"Only seven days of campaigning. They (government) use the television, use all facilities, where is the fairness?" asked Fadzil.

Fadzil said it was also unfair that opposition parties would not be allowed to campaign on television as announced by Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob recently.

On Dr Mahathir's statement that the general election would be held when PAS had become exhausted, Fadzil said PAS would never be too tired to face Umno in the polls.

The PAS chief claimed that the party had undergone major changes with its membership now comprising various groups of people including professionals.

"In the Hulu Langat praliamentray constituency in Selangor alone, PAS has 1,000 engineering professionals as members, what more about the rest of the country," he said.

Fadzil said the people were now bolder and more determined and this could bring about changes in the coming general election.

"We hope the people will no longer be scared of being threatened by Umno and BN (Barisan Nasional) leaders," he added.

-- BERNAMA

no ron sk