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Status quo in BN division of seats

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The allocation of seats among Barisan Nasional component parties for the upcoming general election is unlikely to change from the one adopted for the last elections in 1995.

BN secretary-general Datuk Seri Mohamed Rahmat today said component parties should accept any decision made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the matter.

"I think there will be status quo in the division of seats among the parties," he said after launching an anthology of poems at the Matic auditorium in Jalan Ampang.

Asked if he would be defending his Pulai parliamentary seat in Johor, Mohamed said the decision would be up to the party.

"All members want to be candidates but there are certain criteria that must be met. It's all a question of winning the election. I hope when the decision is made, the members will accept it," he said.

Mohamed said the readiness of the BN election machinery was at "almost 100 per cent" and that the coalition was more confident every day of winning the general election.

"We have been working on this since a year ago, we just need to check the machinery from time to time with divisional trial runs. A national level trial run will be held soon."

Grassroot support, he said, was also very encouraging, even in States which are believed to be Opposition strongholds, such as Kelantan and Perlis.

"The support of the people in Kelantan is improving thanks to (State Umno liaison chief) Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah. In Perlis, where some people say we will lose ... I don't believe it."

When asked about recent tensions between the MIC and the People's Progressive Party, Mohamed said he believed the situation had been exaggerated by the media.

The MIC recently said it had accepted some 20,000 PPP members into its fold, a claim denied by the PPP.

"If it is happening, then my advice is for them to work together and stop bickering, for it can weaken the party," said Mohamed.

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