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Mahfuz-Election

BN WILL CALL FOR EARLY POLLS, SAYS MAHFUZ

ALOR SETAR, Dec 18 (Bernama) -- PAS Youth chief Mahfuz Omar is confident the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) government will call for an early general election.

"I'm confident the BN will not take a longer time to do so. The election is expected to be held at the end of next year or in early 2003 at the latest," he told reporters at his Hari Raya open house here.

He was commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement on Sunday that the BN would not call for a snap election just because it is in a good position to win.

Dr Mahathir, who is also BN chairman, had said the government viewed the calling of elections as a serious matter and not a play thing.

Mahfuz said he was basing his confidence on the image building efforts by the BN and the strategy had succeeded.

He said the BN would not want its image-building efforts to be disrupted midway due to unforeseen circumstances.

"Surely, the BN would not want to be hit by waves half-way. The way to overcome it is to hold an early general election," said the Pokok Sena Member of Parliament.

He said the opposition especially PAS was always prepared for that and had mobilised its machinery since the end of the last general election in 1999.

Commenting on a recent statement by DAP's life adviser Dr Chen Man Hin that the party was planning to form a new opposition alliance without PAS, Mahfuz objected to the move, saying it cannot materialise.

"If it is formed, it will portray an image that the opposition is divided," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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