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Youth chief: Election machinery in top form

UMNO Youth head Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein said the movement's election machinery was in top form to counter challenges posed by the Opposition in the next general election.

"We are ready to face Pas in the election even if it is held tomorrow. Our preparation work has been carried out over the past few months.

"We are sure we will do the best but as for Pas, I think they are more preoccupied with attacking personal issues and making scandalous remarks against Umno leaders," said Hishammuddin in his winding up speech at the closing of the Umno Youth assembly.

He said from feedback he received from the State Umno Youth heads, various election-oriented programmes had been carried out to instill awareness among members to be prepared.

He said this assembly was very important as it was the last before the next general election.

"Another reason is that this will be our last assembly with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as our president. We would like to record our appreciation to him for his contribution."

Earlier, Umno Youth deputy head Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir expressed hope that the movement's leaders and members would be given a bigger representation in the next general election.

Selangor Umno liaison committee head Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo said Youth members should be confident in facing the Opposition.

Dr Khir, who is also Umno Youth executive council member, said when winding up that Barisan Nasional's poor performance in the 1999 general election should be a lesson for members.

"Usually, after going through a turbulent time, we would emerge stronger and wiser. I am confident party members have learnt a lot since the last general election. It is time for us to be prepared," he said.

Dr Mohd Khir also paid tribute to Dr Mahathir for his tremendous contributions to the country.

As the second-liners in the party, Dr Mohd Khir said Youth members should carry on the country's struggle and work hard to develop the country.

Meanwhile, Perlis liaison committee head Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said in view of the Youth's important role in nation-building, its members should be allocated more seats.