

DPM dismisses snap polls speculation
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin denied today that the postponement of Umno polls indicates that the general election will be held next year.

"The postponement is not for the general election but to strengthen the party where members won't be preoccupied with contesting for positions," he told reporters after chairing a National Land Council meeting at Parliament.

Najib Abdul Razak had said the Umno supreme council meeting he chaired yesterday had decided to postpone the party elections originally scheduled for next year by 18 months to stabilise the party.

NONEThe announcement by the prime minister and Umno president had led to speculation that the general election would be held next year.

Muhyiddin, who is also Umno deputy president, noted that this was not the first time the party had postponed elections.

Umno had made such a decision three times before, and all for the same reason, he added.

He said the Umno constitution provided for party elections to be postponed for up to 18 months, but required them to be held before the end of the period.

Muhyiddin said the decision had to be made now so that members at the grassroots would stop preparing for the party elections which could affect Umno.

Islamic state

"Going by normal procedure, branches would start to meet as early as January to nominate candidates if party elections were to be held next year, and there would be campaigning and so on that would affect the party," he added.

He acknowledged that Umno usually held polls after a general election, but said: "This time round, I don't know. There is no need to speculate on when the general election will be held."

Muhyiddin said he believed that PAS was serious about forming an Islamic nation if the opposition coalition won the general election.

He said he did not know how PAS could implement its plan when the DAP, a partner in Pakatan Rakyat, was opposed to any move to set up an Islamic government.

"Since before, every time PAS talked about creating an Islamic nation, the DAP will oppose. There has been no final decision. And now the issue has come up again," Muhyiddin said.

In a news website interview recently, PAS said it would push for an Islamic government if the party and its partners won the general election.

- Bernama

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