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**PUTRAJAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is confident the ruling coalition he leads will be returned in the coming 12th general election with its two-thirds majority intact simply because it has fulfilled its promises to the people.

He believes the people will again give Barisan Nasional a strong mandate to rule the country as they are confident it would be able to continue with its efforts to develop and lead the nation towards greater prosperity.

"We hope to get a big support, at least two-thirds majority," he said at a press conference to announce the dissolution of the 11th parliament.

In the last general election in 2004, the BN won its biggest victory ever, winning 90% of the 219 seats in the Dewan Rakyat and controlling all the state assemblies, except Kelantan which it failed to capture by a mere whisker.

Asked whether the BN could repeat the 2004 performance, Abdullah said: "I am not sure about that. I think 2004 was a special record.

# Pak Lah confident of two-thirds majority

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But we hope to get a big support as the voters know that the BN has a good track record."

He said BN had fulfilled its promises to the people and carried out many programmes and it will continue to ensure the programmes will eventually produce the desired results, benefit the people and contribute towards the country's development.

"We have succeeded in developing the country by upgrading it from one level to another. And we hope to be able to give a good service and value add to our success thus far. We have the experience and capabilities. And we can carry out all the development plans," he said.

Abdullah said the elections machinery has been arranged and will be mobilised accordingly.

He also advised all state governments, except Sarawak, to dissolve their state

assemblies to enable the state elections to be held simultaneously.

"I have had an audience with Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin and received his consent to dissolve the Parliament," he said, adding that the Parliament and Election Commission (EC) have been informed.

He said the EC will decide on the nomination and polling dates.

The EC will meet this morning and is expected to determine the nomination and election dates.

On Tuesday, Abdullah had denied that the Parliament will be dissolved yesterday, prompting reporters to ask why he changed his mind.

To this, he said: "I cannot give any clues on the date of the dissolution because His Majesty has not decided. How can I make a statement or give any clues beforehand? That is not possible. The Agong must know

first and make a decision."

Asked whether the Barisan Nasional list of candidates is ready, he said no.

He said once it is ready, he would make public the number of new faces or incumbents who will be vying for the parliamentary and state seats.

While refusing to comment on the "15th" date, he brushed aside a suggestion that he was trying to project a certain image as the announcement was made during the 15-day Chinese New Year celebration.

"No. It will not affect any activities or celebrations of the Chinese," he said.

On why the election is held 15 months before the current mandate ends, Abdullah said there is nothing wrong with having it now.

"I think it is good to have it now. It is not a problem. I believe with the strong mandate, we will be able to continue with our efforts to develop the country and give abundance to the people."

As for his hope for the voters, he said: "I hope they will understand the issues related to our country and make an objective evaluation. And when the time comes, cast your vote."

He also expressed hope that the election process, especially the nominations and polling, will take place smoothly.

"Hopefully, there would not be any disturbances or difficulties faced by the people that would hinder them from coming out and exercise their rights to vote for the candidates of their choice," he said.

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