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Umno polls postponed

Party elections to be held back by 18 months, says president

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Umno party elections scheduled for next year will be postponed for 18 months, said its president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"The Umno supreme council unanimously agreed that the party elections next year at the branch, division and supreme council level be postponed. This is done so that Umno can focus on strengthening the party," said Najib after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting last night.

He did not give a specific date when the party election would be held.

Asked if the postponement was a sign that the general election was around the corner, the Prime Minister said there was no reason to get excited over the move.

"We have done this before. There is nothing peculiar," he said, adding the postponement was provided for in the party constitution.

Najib said Umno did not want the next year or the following year to become a year of "political battles" that could cause internal rift.

"We want Umno to focus on the strengthening and rehabilitation of the party based on the new political model," he said.

On the re-shuffle of the Umno state leadership, Najib said he would announce the new line-up before the end of the year.

He added the new line-up would involve some new faces and some re-appointments.

"I need some time with the deputy president and secretary-general to meet and discuss with certain leaders at the state level, to determine their role and expectation at their respective states," he said.

On the speculated Cabinet reshuffle, which Najib had recently labelled as rumours, he said: "When I said rumours, some of the speculations can turn out to be true, while others can be wrong".