

PM: I'M IN NO RUSH TO HOLD GE15

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Umno must first be well-prepared to face polls, says Ismail Sabri

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said he is in no rush to hold the 15th General Election (GE15) as there is still "unfinished business", including steering the nation out of the Covid-19 pandemic and ensuring political stability.

The Umno vice-president said although he had no intention of delaying the polls to remain as prime minister, he had a major task, which was to look into the needs of people of various races, including those in rural areas.

"If we dissolve Parliament, we (Umno) have to be well-prepared to ensure victory. Going to a war ill-prepared will cause problems. Are we really prepared (for GE15)? That is why I say, 'be patient'.

"One of the conditions (for us) to conduct an election is that we have to be fully prepared.

"A few Umno state liaison com-

mittee chairmen told me they were not ready.

"We have to ensure everything is ready before announcing it," he said at the opening of the Bera Wanita Umno, Youth and Puteri delegates' meeting at Bera Convention Hall yesterday.

Ismail Sabri, who is Bera Umno chairman, said Barisan Nasional's (BN) landslide victory in the Melaka election on Nov 20 should not be used as a yardstick to gauge the people's support nor seen as a green light to conduct GE15.

He said despite the win, Umno had seen only a one per cent increase in popular votes and was fortunate that supporters from opposition parties did not come out to vote.

"The Melaka election recorded a voter turnout of 65 per cent, and the Chinese community recorded a 50 per cent voter turnout. This was our advantage.

"Furthermore, the Umno election machinery from around the country was deployed to help in the election.

"The results in Melaka cannot be used as a benchmark.

"In a general election, all the states' Umno election machinery will have to work hard to ensure victory in their constituencies.

"The Melaka scenario cannot be applied to a general election.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who is also Umno vice-president, arriving at the opening of the Bera Wanita Umno, Youth and Puteri delegates' meeting yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

So calls for it to be held soon have to be studied."

He said there was a lot of work that had to be done, particularly in ensuring political stability.

"Political stability is vital as uncertainties will prevent people (investors) from coming to the country.

"That is why I introduced the Keluarga Malaysia concept, which ensures inclusiveness for all Malaysians. When I took office, I pledged to solve the economic and health crises, which have yet to be achieved, and I have a lot more to do.

"I need support from everyone, including my party, to solve people's problems. However, there seems to be never-ending poli-

ticking."

Although some in the government had shown no responsibility for their actions, he said he had a huge task of not only serving Umno but also all Malaysians.

He said calls for a snap election would jeopardise the plans tabled in the 2022 Budget as the allocations could be used only next year.

"Allocation tabled during the 2022 Budget will be spent next year. If we have the general election early next year, then the budget cannot be rolled out and plans cannot be implemented."

Meanwhile, he said in a meeting with chief editors from media organisations during his visit to

Indonesia last month, he was informed that the neighbouring country enjoyed political stability while Malaysia appeared to be in political disarray.

"They mentioned that Indonesia had once faced political turmoil and were once impressed with Malaysia's political stability when Tun (Dr Mahathir Mohamad) served for 22 years while Datuk Seri Najib Razak served for nine years.

"Now, it is the opposite. Indonesia is stable, while Malaysia has seen three prime ministers in a single term.

"Three prime ministers have met Indonesian President Joko Widodo. I am not sure if there will be further changes before 2023."