

No talks yet within Umno on GE15

PM downplays the calls to dissolve the Parliament and pave way for the GE15 after Umno won 33 out of 56 seats in the Johor state elections

by **AZREEN HANI**

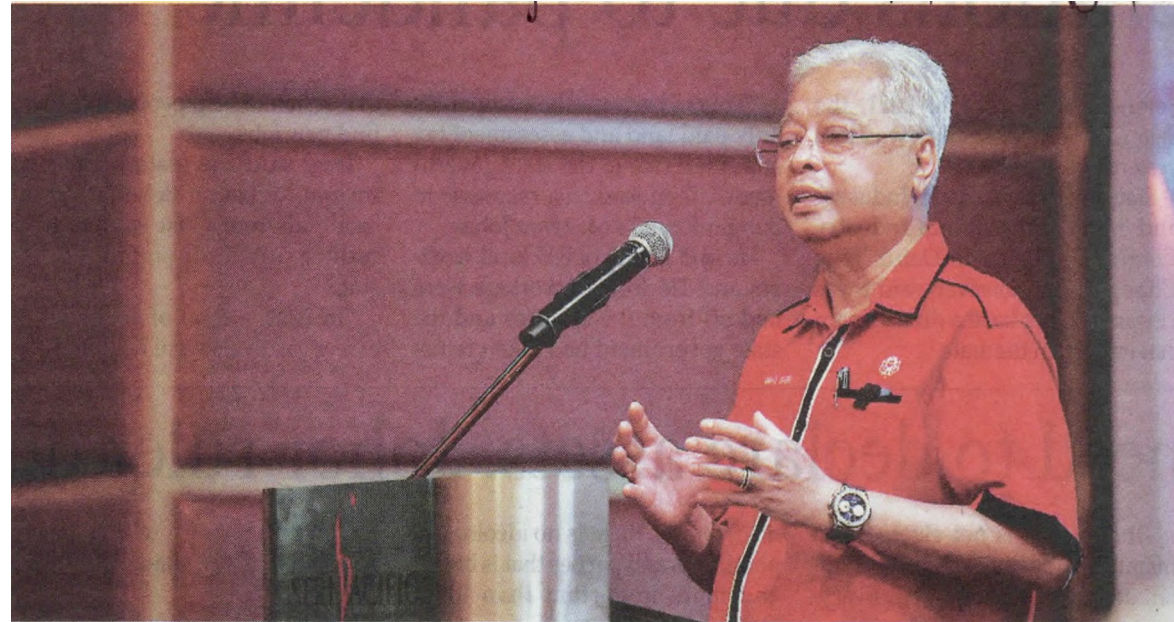
PRIME Minister (PM) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob says the calls for the 15th General Election (GE15) have yet to be discussed within Umno.

Ismail Sabri, who is also Umno VP, said the matter should be deliberated with party members first.

"If we decide the date for GE ourselves, we might be accused of trying to take over the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's power. So we cannot do that," he told reporters on the sidelines of Umno General Assembly in the World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday.

Prior to this, Ismail Sabri had downplayed the calls to dissolve the Parliament and pave way for the GE15, after Umno won 33 out of 56 seats in the Johor state elections.

"Ready or not, let the party leadership decide. Many more areas need to be studied. Each result would be discussed in the party. Just because one small group wants to hold the GE, do we have to do it? This is a major decision, we have to discuss," *Bernama* reported him as saying.



Bernama

If we decide the date for GE ourselves, we might be accused of trying to take over the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's power, says Ismail Sabri

Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is expected to address issues surrounding GE15 and the appointment of Johor Menteri Besar today.

A total of 5,571 delegates from 191 divisions nationwide are expected to attend the four-day assembly.

Earlier, Umno wing leaders Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki and Datuk Zahidah Zarik Khan have called for the GE15 to be held before the party election.

"The Youth would like to propose to the top leadership and the Umno General Assembly to amend the party constitution, like our com-

ponent partner MCA, so that party elections are held only after each GE.

"This is to prevent any attempt to sabotage, weaken the unity and strength of the party," he said in his keynote address.

Zahidah said the party's focus right now should be on the national poll.

"Our focus after this is the GE15. Each of us must focus on preparations for this. Any attempt to divert this focus must be stopped," she said.

"This includes any movement to hold party elections earlier than the GE," Zahidah added.

Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Dr

Noraini Ahmad said in her speech that the memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Opposition should be taken into consideration before calling for the GE15.

"Umno women are always ready at any time when the time comes. We also need to take into account the agreement and understanding, the political stability of the MoU between the government bloc and the Opposition because of its validity until July 2022," she said.

The MoU, signed between the government and the Opposition in September last year, will expire on July 31.