

'Independents may not defend seats'
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Picture to get clearer once Parliament is dissolved

SOME independent members of parliament might not seek re-election in the next general election.

In revealing this, Bayan Baru member of parliament Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim said this was discussed, during recent meetings of the independent caucus of MPs.

Zahrain, however, refused to reveal the individuals who were interested in defending their seats.

"There are some who are interested in seeking re-election and others who are not. However, this can only be decided once the Parliament is dissolved."

Speaking to reporters yesterday, the former Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) MP said they were also open to discussions with Barisan Nasional on seat allocations.

"As for now, the caucus has not discussed with any parties. We are open to talking to BN but definitely not with Pakatan Rakyat because we know what they are like."

On whether he was one of the interested parties, Zahrain replied: "I will cross the bridge when the time comes.

"As far as I am concerned, I am still an MP until 2013. I am entitled to my opinions on issues that affect the rakyat."

Besides Zahrain, Independent Caucus comprises five other former PKR parliamentarians -- N. Gobalakrishnan (Padang Serai), Tan Tee Beng (Nibong Tebal), Zulkifli Noordin (Kulim Bandar Baru), Mohsin Fadzli Samsuri (Bagan Serai) and Wee Choo Keong (Wangsa Maju).

On another issue, Zahrain said BN could regain the seats it lost in the 2008 general election if it campaigned with humility to dismiss the perception that its leaders were "snobbish".

"I would like to advise my friends in Umno and BN that the issue is not about winning two-thirds majority but more about securing a comfortable victory."

He also agreed with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's call to field fresh and winnable candidates to win back the confidence of voters.

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