

**Election Not This Year - Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 11 (Bernama) -- The 13th general election will not be held this year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said, ending months of speculation that parliament would be dissolved Friday.

Speaking to reporters after chairing the Barisan Nasional (BN) supreme council meeting here, Najib said the election date was not discussed at the meeting.

The Umno president said the meeting only discussed measures to strengthen the national coalition so that it would emerge stronger to face the election.

"We have also discussed about the importance of us returning to the spirit and BN's principles of respecting one another," he said after the meeting at Menara Dato' Onn here.

He said the discussion also centred around issues of common interest "so that we can come up with consensus on how to tackle issues, either sensitive or otherwise."

The prime minister pointed out that there were statements on party matters or issues which could be made openly but not to the extent of touching the sensitivities of other parties.

He was also asked on the stand taken by the MCA which was reportedly against the proposal to allow Malaysians abroad to vote in the coming election on grounds that they have lost touch with the country for a long time.

Najib said MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek had explained the matter to him.

The MCA was concerned over the implementation of such proposal as it involved logistics due to the fact that the voting process would involve about 800 parliamentary and state seats.

"So, BN is not opposed to it but BN wants to highlight the enormous difficulty in implementing it," noted Najib.

When met by reporters after the meeting, Dr Chua said if the proposals were implemented, it would involve sending about 800 ballot boxes abroad.

There would also be a need to send party representatives and observers to monitor the voting process and this would involve enormous cost, he said, adding that the MCA was concerned that this could give rise to doubts or accusation on the validity of the process.

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