

**Najib rules out general election this year**  
**Reuters**  
**November 11, 2011**

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 11 — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today the next general election would not be held this year, official news agency Bernama reported.

The next polls are not due until 2013 but there has been growing speculation that Najib could call for snap elections this year or early 2012 while the country's economic growth is still relatively strong.

Najib (picture) said ruling coalition parties had discussed ways to strengthen the group ahead of polls but did not deliberate on the timing of the election.

"We have also discussed about the importance of us returning to the spirit and (ruling coalition) Barisan Nasional's principles of respecting one another," he was quoted by the news agency as saying.

The ruling coalition suffered its worst performance in the last general election in 2008 when it lost its two-thirds parliamentary majority and ceded control of five states.

The opposition led by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has struggled to build on gains made in the 2008 polls but analysts expect the next elections to be a tough fight due to voter frustration over racial tensions and slow political reforms.

Some analysts have said that Najib could call for polls sooner rather than later, to avoid a sharp slowdown in its trade-reliant economy as the global outlook deteriorates.

Malaysia's economy depends heavily on global demand for its electronics and commodities such as palm oil and crude oil, and a global downturn is expected to hit growth.

Economic growth is officially expected to moderate this year from a 10-year high of 7.2 per cent in 2010 due to difficult global economic conditions.

Some economists have already cut their forecasts for Malaysian economic growth this year, which the government estimates will come in at between 5.0 and 5.5 per cent.

The central bank today held its key interest rate unchanged at 3.00 per cent but warned of risks to growth amid the volatility in financial markets. — Reuters

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