

For BN, a call to arms
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Muhyiddin was said to have told the lawmakers to begin working their home ground as though they were already campaigning. — file pic

KUALA LUMPUR, July 27 — As speculation rises over the likely date of the next general election, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin rounded up over 100 Barisan Nasional lawmakers on Monday night and told them to work as if the “polls could be held at the end of the week”.

“The deputy prime minister did not give any indication except to tell us to be ready at all times, to assume as if the polls could be held at the end of the week... that was the only indication, nothing else,” one MP told *The Malaysian Insider*.

The first-term MP added that Muhyiddin also urged all representatives gathered for the annual meeting to make preparations as though they were already facing the polls.

“He (Muhyiddin) said there is a likelihood that the polls will be held this year or early next year, but we must continue working, to meet with the people and work as if the polls could be held at the end of the week. That was his message, yes, and it is his hope,” said the MP.

Monday’s discussion, which comes just three weeks after the tumultuous Bersih 2.0 rally calling for electoral reforms, was held in PWTC and saw the attendance of MPs from the BN Backbenchers Club and deputy ministers.

Several MPs also confirmed that the meeting centred largely on gearing up for the polls, which many speculate will likely be held sometime after Hari Raya, in the months of October or November.

The Najib administration’s mandate only ends in 2013.

"It (the discussion) contained a lot of advice on how to face the upcoming elections. More than 100 MPs attended this time," said another MP.

Several MPs who attended the discussion were also seen exchanging messages with one another via the Twitter micro-blogging and believed to be related to the meet, with one comment saying, "You asked an interesting question".

But details of the "question" or its response could not be ascertained.

Another MP who attended the meeting said that Muhyiddin, who is also BN's deputy chairman, had told representatives to spend more time in their respective constituencies.

"The deputy prime minister told us, if we have no official duty, to try and spend time in our areas, to meet constituents and hold plenty of activities," said the MP.

Muhyiddin also purportedly told MPs to use social media tools to get closer with their voters.

"According to Muhyiddin, now more voters are using social media, especially newly-registered voters. If possible, [we are to] use one more media platform, whether Twitter, blogs or Facebook to communicate with the people... this was the aspect stressed on by the deputy prime minister," said another MP.

When officiating the 19th annual congress of the Indian Progressive Front (IPF) last Sunday, Muhyiddin had asked all BN component parties to work together as a team to face the coming 13th general election.

"We don't have much time. It's only a matter of a few months ahead and we must show to the people that we are solidly united to face the general election.

"We may have had team one or team two and so on, but from now on I want us to have only one team, that is Team BN," he was quoted as saying by Bernama Online.

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