

Barisan gears up for polls
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PUTRAJAYA: Barisan Nasional's preparations for the general election are "going into the highest gear" with leaders of the ruling coalition scheduled to meet in the next two weeks to discuss the polls.

Umno information chief Datuk Ahmad Maslan said all members of the Barisan election machinery were getting ready for the 13th general election.

"If the machinery was in first gear four years ago, the time has come for it to go into fifth gear," he told Barisan leaders in Arau.

"The general election will be held soon. March 8 will mark four years since the last general election," he said at the meeting on Tuesday night, adding that national polls usually took place sooner than that.

Umno leaders said the party was "very much ready" for the polls and they themselves were eagerly waiting for Parliament to be dissolved.

Supreme council member Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi said the Umno election machinery had been "running on top gear" for quite sometime now.

"In Johor, for example, the Mentri Besar (Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman) has been visiting and revisiting constituencies.

"We have resolved all outstanding issues and are just waiting for the Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak) to sound the bell," said Dr Mohd Puad, who is also the Batu Pahat Umno chief.

Beaufort Umno chief Datuk Seri Lajim Ukin said that the party members in Sabah were already in election mood.

"We have been preparing for the polls for quite sometime.

"There are some internal issues yet to be resolved, but these are minor matters that will surely be settled once Parliament is dissolved," said Lajim, who is a supreme council member.

Barisan secretary-general Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor said no date had been fixed for the supreme council meeting this month.

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