

**Perlis will still be BN's in GE13, says MB  
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By Ida Lim**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 30 — The Perlis menteri besar has said that a victory in the state polls is "surely with" the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, the New Sunday Times reported today.

Datuk Seri Dr Md Isa Sabu was dismissive of the opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR)'s confidence that it will take over Perlis in the 13th general elections due soon.

"Pakatan Rakyat obviously has the chance and right to contest but unfortunately, that is all it can do — contest. Victory is surely with the BN," the BN man was quoted as saying in an interview published in the weekend edition of English daily New Straits Times.

"Perlis has been led by BN for years. It has proven to be a BN stronghold," the Umno leader said, pointing out that it was the "only northern state that survived the political tsunami in the 2008 general election."

Following the 2008 elections, BN now holds 13 out of the 15 state seats in Perlis, while PAS holds the remaining two seats of Sanglang and Simpang Empat.

"I am confident we will win Sanglang and Simpang Empat. The people are back with BN. The people have shown that they support us, immaterial of whether they are Chinese or Malay. The support is great. This is an indicator that the people are back with Umno and BN. The people of Perlis know that BN is the party for all," Md Isa said.

He appeared to dismiss PAS' claims that the Chinese support for BN had dropped, but instead said that BN enjoyed "tremendous" support from the Chinese voters.

"The Chinese community in Perlis, even in Sanglang and Simpang Empat, which are said to be PAS strongholds, knows their success was not due to PAS or Pakatan Rakyat but because of BN and Umno," the New Sunday Times reported him as saying.

"The people in Perlis, including the Chinese, are not people who are easily confused. They base (their decisions) on facts and results and not on empty promises."

Md Isa also downplayed claims by PAS that the state Umno party was divided into factions.

"We understand our own party and BN more than PAS does. What I can say is that Umno and BN had never had splits. There may have been a few differences in opinion. That's normal," he said.

Earlier this month, Perlis PAS commissioner Hashim Jasin reportedly said the state's former menteri besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim had recently admitted to him that Perlis Umno was now split into four factions. He had also told the Harakah Daily of "phenomenal" changes in the state's Chinese support towards BN, expressing confidence that at least 70 to 80 per cent of the community's votes would go to PR in the coming polls.

He had said Perlis PR was well prepared to face the election, saying the pact's three parties have even agreed on a "shadow Cabinet" for the state administration, in the event of a takeover.

Hashim said that PR's three parties of PAS, PKR and DAP were very united in Perlis, saying that they had already settled their discussions on seat allocations last year.

The BN's mandate expires next April and Parliament will automatically dissolve, paving the way for national polls then unless Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak calls them earlier.

The contest between BN and PR has tightened considerably in their race for power.

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