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MYT 1:10:44 PM

Parliament dissolved, elections on

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has announced that Parliament has been dissolved, paving the way for the 12th general election.

At a hastily convened press conference at his office Wednesday afternoon, he said he had met the Yang Di Pertuan Agong in the morning and received His Majesty's consent to dissolve Parliament.

"I've informed Parliament and the Election Commission," Abdullah said. The state assemblies have also been advised to dissolve.

The Prime Minister declined to speculate on what date Malaysians would cast their ballots, saying that it would be up to the Election Commission (EC) to decide.

"I am confident of winning, and I hope that we will retain our two-thirds majority," he said.

The ruling Barisan Nasional coalition swept to a landslide victory in the last general election in 2004.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission said it would announce polling and nomination day on Thursday at its office in Putrajaya.

The Election Commission held several meetings Wednesday in preparation for the Prime Minister's announcement of the dissolution of Parliament.

"We have got the declaration on the dissolution of Parliament by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong and the announcement of nomination and polling will be done tomorrow," said EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman.

When asked if nomination day was February 21 and election day on March 2nd, he said: "You can speculate anything you want. The official announcement is tomorrow.

"You wait for the official announcement," he added.

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