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DPM: Invitation made in good faith

Ridzwan Abdullah; Sajahan Waheed; Nik Imran Abdullah  
KLANG, Sun. - The open invitation to opposition parties to join the Barisan Nasional was made sincerely and in good faith, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

"As the Prime Minister said, we are not power hungry and that is why we are willing to share power with other parties," he said.

Abdullah was commenting on the invitation yesterday by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to opposition parties to join BN since it practised an open policy and was willing to share power.

Dr Mahathir, who is BN chairman, said everyone needed to work with the Government to face threats from external enemies.

Abdullah was speaking after launching the Skoda car exhibition by Malaysia's main distributor and franchise holder AutoPraha Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Pantai Bharu Group, today.

In Kuala Terengganu, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said opposition parties that wanted to join the BN should be sincere and accept its policies without imposing any conditions.

He said it was the principle of BN to invite opposition parties which were sincere to join the coalition to develop the nation and safeguard it from external threats.

The opposition parties, he added, should have the spirit of co-operation if they wished to join the coalition.

He said parties which used to be BN's political foes were back in the coalition as BN practised the spirit of co-operation.

"Pas was once in BN but failed to show its loyalty. So it had to leave BN. If Pas had shown co-operation, the party would have remained in BN," he said after attending a campaign on voter registration at Wisma Seri Amar today.

In Putrajaya, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said the opposition parties should accept the invitation if they were really concerned about the people and the country's future.

Dr Lim said it was important for the people to be united and face threats from outside such as terrorism and extreme religious activities.

"I hope that opposition parties will accept the invitation and understand the need for Malaysians to be united in facing global challenges.

"There are many other things which we can concentrate on such as nation-building if there is less politicking in the country."

Dr Lim, who is Primary Industries Minister, said this after opening the general meeting of the Gerakan life members' council.

Echoing similar views, National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman said the task of realising Malaysia's vision of becoming a fully-developed nation would be made easier if there was political stability.

"If the Opposition is sincere in wanting to play a role in the development process, it should take the offer seriously," she said after opening the Kita-Sama-Kita community programme in Permatang Badak in Kuantan today.

Siti Zaharah, who is Umno supreme council member and MP for Paya Besar, said a united front would also ensure the nation's continued survival and independence, besides promising a better future for the people especially the younger generation.

She said the opposition parties should set aside their differences and assist in tackling present and future challenges.

"Why shouldn't we unite, if in the end it will bring about peace, stability and progress?"

Siti Zaharah said the Prime Minister's invitation was a sincere effort to ensure Malaysia was resilient enough to face external threats.

"The Opposition now must show its sincerity by responding to this (invitation)."