

PM returns, campaigns in opposition backyard
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Unfazed by recent political developments at home, the prime minister moved to prop up grassroots support for the ruling coalition in an opposition zone hours after touching down in the country this morning.

Speaking at a school in Subang Perdana, Najib Abdul Razak (at podium) commended the encouraging reception despite the short notice, suggesting that it may be a good indicator for the next general election.

"Is this a good sign or not? Let's wait and see. We know that BN can bring progress and it has been proven," he said.

Subang Perdana lies within the Subang parliamentary constituency which is held by PKR's R Sivarasa.

Among those in attendance were the BN leaders who included Selangor MCA chief Donald Lim Siang Chai, Subang Umno division chief Muhammad Bushro Mat Johor and Subang MIC division chief NR Krishnan.

The prime minister arrived at the KL International Airport at 9 this morning after more than a week abroad on working visits to Turkmenistan, Britain and Italy.

Najib decided to return today, cancelling his holiday with his family abroad.

Speaking to an audience of nearly 1,000, the premier wasted no chance in slamming the Selangor government, subtly suggesting that they lacked vision by subscribing to populist policies.

"As head of government I must see things in perspective, from abroad and at the grassroots level. A responsible government cannot be populist, we have short- and long-term considerations.

"We do not make promises that we cannot keep. We do not say that if today we form the government, tomorrow fuel prices will go down," he said in reference to opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim's widely-known promise.

Najib also defended BN's efforts, emphasising the various subsidies provided by the government which amounts to much more than what the opposition could offer.

"The other side (Pakatan Rakyat) gives RM100 and the whole village will riuh (get excited) but the government gives billions to the country!" he said as a small group of people cheered "Hidup BN".

"Only the sound of their drums are louder," he added.

White envelopes handed out

Later, Najib handed out white envelopes to several in attendance who were invited from welfare homes around the area.

A lady in a wheelchair, who was from a welfare home in Sungai Buloh, when approached, revealed that the envelope contained RM200.

Earlier, Najib attended Friday prayers at Masjid Subang Perdana which was beside the primary school where the luncheon was held.

A crowd of some 200 people from the area had flocked to the mosque to join the premier in prayers.

Later, he was greeted by pupils from the school who were waving the Jalur Gemilang while the 1Malaysia song was played.

The visit to the opposition backyard comes after the Bersih 2.0 rally on July 9 which has been described as the premier's 'international black-eye' by DAP supremo Lim Kit Siang.

Analysts have speculated that police's crackdown during the rally would erode the ruling coalition's support as did the Bersih rally in 2007, which is credited as causing the BN to lose its two-thirds majority in Parliament in 2008.

In 2008, PKR's Sivarasa defeated BN's M Murugesan with a 6,709-vote majority in the Subang parliamentary seat.

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