

Najib hints at increased pensions

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By Koh Jun Lin

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak hinted of higher pensions for civil service retirees when meeting with them today as part of his general election campaign.

However, Najib stressed this is subject to economic conditions to ensure that the country does not go bankrupt.

"Every year, the pension increases by two percent, but that is the minimum. If there is government money (to finance it), we can increase it.

"No problems, but (we need to) expand the economy and get the income first," he said when addressing a crowd of some 3,000 former civil servants in a function at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre today.

The enthusiastic crowd appeared to be engaged by Najib's speech, cheering and shouting back in support at various high points of Najib's 30-minute speech that urged them to support BN.

Among the guests of honour at the event include Retiree's Umno Club president Aseh Che Mat, who is also Perbadanan Putrajaya president, chief secretary to the government Ali Hamsa and Public Service Department director-general Mohamad Zabidi Zainal.

The policy of increasing civil service pension by two percent annually was introduced in the 2012 budget to ensure that it keeps up with inflation.

1Malaysia Privilege Card for retirees too

Meanwhile, Najib also announced the 1Malaysia Privilege Card would also be extended to retirees.

"I whispered to the chief secretary just now. The discount card given to police and military personnel will be extended to retirees," he said.

The discount card was introduced last year and provides discounts for various goods and services, including at grocery chain Mydin, clothes shop Jakel, and restaurant chain KFC.

Meanwhile, Najib, who is also the BN chairperson, also dismissed the significance of prominent ex-military personnel who have become Pakatan Rakyat election candidates, saying that many more have opted to stay with BN.

"Let the two or three of them go astray and become opposition candidates, there are many

more of us.

"I know how have become candidates on the other side, I know their background, and I know why (they did that). In truth, they have problems," he said without elaborating further.

"In our struggles, we must have principles and defend our dignity. I respect all of you in this room, each of who have dignity – old loyalties were not set aside and you continued to support the present government even in retirement," he said, to which the crowd cheered with a resounding "Yes".

Though he did not name any persons, ex-military opposition candidates include former army chief Gen (Rtd) Md Hashim Hussein in Johor Bahru and former rear admiral Rear Admiral (Rtd) Imran Abdul Hamid in Lumut.

Both will be contesting under the PKR ticket.

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