

BN to set up 'political lab' to decide its future

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By Nigel Aw

A political laboratory will be set up to formulate strategies to determine the future of the four-decade old BN coalition following last month's general election, its chief and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said tonight.

"It is about the future of BN, taking into account the existing political landscape and some of the trends we have observed, as well as our performance in the last general election.

"We need to decide the way forward for BN," Najib told a press conference after chairing a BN supreme council meeting at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

NONEHe added that the lab would look into various strategies that could be implemented in changing BN.

"We will consider whether it requires a structural change, whether it is just branding the BN or whether it is to be a change in policies or even all three of them together as a package.

"That will be the scope of the political lab that will be carried out in July," he said, adding the lab's discussions would take however long necessary.

Najib said "all options" were on the table, including the possibility of turning BN into a single party, but it must be a model accepted by all BN component party members.

The lab was necessary to ensure BN's continued success in future.

"Through a deep reflection, we can determine the steps forward that are more reasonable and targeted in terms of a political landscape that has changed," he said.

The lab will comprise BN component parties, though NGOs, such as youth groups, may be co-opted, he added.

'Enforcement, not blame game'

On the haze, Najib said Indonesia needed to look at enforcement, regardless of the country of origin of the companies operating there that were responsible for the haze engulfing Singapore and Malaysia.

NONE"The question is not who owns the plantations (that are doing open burning) but the offence that is being committed. Whether the companies belong to Indonesia, Malaysia or Singapore, as long as there is an offence, action must be taken," he said.

He also offered the service of a water bomber to Indonesia to assist in putting out the haze that is causing a crisis in the region.

Najib added that special prayers for rain would be held tomorrow.

National Resources and Environment Minister G Palanivel is expected to meet his Indonesian counterpart on the haze problem on Wednesday.

Malaysiakini and several other online media were banned from covering the BN press conference tonight. This report is based on a recording of the press conference.

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