

Najib working hard to help 'gang member' Adenan win
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S'WAK POLLS The federal and Sarawak governments must be in the same 'gang' to ensure continued development for the state, said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

As such, he said, he was working hard to help his 'gang member' Sarawak Chief Minister Adenan Satem to win the 11th Sarawak state election on May 7.

He said the people in the state must elect the government led by Adenan who could look out for them and bring new hope.

"We need a government which does not only make promises but can fulfil those promises for our benefit," he said.

Najib was speaking at the launch of the 76.2km Simpang Bitangor-Sg Kua alignment of Sarawak Pan-Borneo Highway Project near the Durin Bridge, Sibul today.

He urged the people in the state not to be fooled by the 'Sarawak Dream' of the opposition as it was merely propaganda.

The Simpang Bintangor-Sungai Kua alignment is the fourth package of the Pan-Borneo Highway project.

It involves upgrading work on the existing road from two to four lanes - from Simpang Bintangor to Simpang Julau and from the Sibul Airport to the Sungai Kua Bridge.

Worth RM1.7 billion, the package includes the construction of two elevated intersections, 79 bus stops, seven flyovers, 46 U-turns and a stopover at Julau.

Apai besar is in town

Speaking in Betong later, Najib said that as Malaysia's 'Apai besar' (number one leader), his main agenda now was to see Sarawak to be on par with the peninsula.

"As Apai besar of Malaysia, there's one thing I have not yet managed to deliver, that is to position Sarawak in terms of its development and income-level to be on par with the peninsula. I consider this my main agenda," he said.

Najib, who is on his 50th working visit to Sarawak since assuming office as prime minister six years ago, said development should be centered on social justice, taking into account balanced development between the urban and rural areas.

"Development should not be concentrated in city areas, but should also extend to and

include the rural areas. As a caring government, we are indebted to the rural community that has always been a staunch supporter of the BN government.

"Therefore) it is worth it for the BN government to spend on development in the rural areas," he said when opening the Betong Rural Transformation Centre (RTC) in Mid-Layar today.

Also present were Sarawak Deputy Chief Minister Alfred Jabu, Rural and Regional Development Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob, and Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Douglas Uggah Embas.

Najib said close ties between the federal and Sarawak governments had managed to spur development in the state.

He cited the establishment of the Rural Transformation Centre (RTC) in Betong as evidence of close cooperation that benefited all parties.

He said through the RTC initiative, various ministries, departments and agencies from both the federal and state governments would be accessible under one roof, offering a variety of services to local residents, and it would also lead to more development in the area.

"If the state and federal governments are in one family (Barisan Nasional) there are so many possibilities that we previously could not even imagine, but can now be implemented. Our (federal and state government) journey has come very far," he said.

More RTCs

Meanwhile, Ismail Sabri said RTC Betong, which is located next to the Pan-Borneo Highway, will provide convenience to road users as well as benefit the local population, in line with the government's desire to develop the rural areas.

"The RTC will transform the rural areas, so that it can attract private investment, provide job opportunities and economic activity, as well as encourage the younger generation to continue to live in and develop these rural areas," he said.

Ismail Sabri said so far, the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development had managed to set up nine RTCs across the country, namely RTC Perak, RTC Kelantan, RTC Pahang, RTC Johor, RTC Kedah, RTC Terengganu, RTC Malacca, and two RTCs in Sarawak.

"Two more RTCs, in Negri Sembilan and Penang, are being set up and are expected to be fully operational by the middle of this year.

"My ministry is also identifying potential new locations in Sabah and Selangor to set up RTCs," he said.

The 1.708km Batang Rajang Bridge which is also known as the Durin Bridge will also be upgraded to four lanes for the convenience of road-users.

The alignment works are expected to be completed by 2020.

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