

PM aims not just to win GE but prepare next generation

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, during the first town hall session on his National Transformation 2050 (TN50), outlined the difference between a politician and a statesman.

Citing a poet, the premier said a politician thinks of the next general election while a statesman thinks of the next generation.

But the prime minister is definitely a man who wants to have his cake and eat it, too.

“If possible, I want to win the election, too, but I also want to prepare the next generation,” he said in his speech at the event at Universiti Malaya last night.

Najib was explaining the responsibilities of a leader, which are mainly to ensure the people’s welfare as well as to prepare a better future for the country.

Addressing the audience comprised mostly of youths, Najib said it was only apt that the dialogue session be held with them in attendance.

“This hall is filled with youths and those who think they are still young,” he joked.

Young or old aside, Najib then went on to say that last night’s event was only the start, with subsequent sessions to include women, corporate figures, academics and religious scholars, among others.

'I am good listener'

Najib expressed his hope for all of them to be gathered under “one umbrella” - the TN50 plan.

“I want this vision to come from the people so that you have a sense of ownership,” he said.

Meanwhile, Najib said as leaders, although they may be gifted with words, they must also walk the talk.

“As leaders, you must also be a good listener, and I’m a good listener,” he insisted.

“Today I want to hear your voice, we want to hear your views and aspirations because 2050 belongs to the youths.”

Najib while tabling Budget 2017 in October last year, **unveiled TN50** stating the time has come to “put the past aside”.

The prime minister had stressed how his vision was a bottom-up approach, insisting on receiving input from the people.

Explaining further his 2050 vision, Najib cited the New Economic Policy of the 1970s and Vision 2020, in which each was a plan for the following 30.

“Therefore, after 60 years, it’s most suitable to look at the next 30 years because if we want to have a vision, we must realise that it needs time,” he said.

Najib's difficult childhood

Najib in his speech also took the opportunity to recount how his late father, the country’s second premier Abdul Razak Hussein, had told his children how he went to school without shoes.

“Also the case for me – don’t think that my life was easy from the start. When I was in school, I was like any normal citizen, my pocket money was 30 sen, not more than that.

“I regularly rode my bicycle from Seri Perdana (the official residence of the prime minister) to Tanglin Hospital to buy nasi lemak,” he said.

But Malaysia, he added, has changed, and he said the next 30 years to come will be even “much greater”.

And big changes, he believes, will be able to occur in the 30-year journey, expressing his wish for the country to be in the world’s top 20 nations.

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