

Hulu S'gor by-election a referendum: PM
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The by-election for the Hulu Selangor parliamentary constituency is not merely to pick a member of parliament but it is also a referendum on the new direction of the country, said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

He said that among the main consideration in achieving the national direction was the New Economic Model (NEM) which was precisely planned and it was hoped that within the next 10 years, Malaysia would succeed in becoming the most advanced nation.

"Malaysian news had travelled extensively to the extent that (United States) President Barack Obama (during the bilateral talks in Washington) had asked about the country's New Economic Model. I had given a very clear explanation on the NEM.

"This is a recognition for the BN (Barisan Nasional) government because we have a clear direction. We know the direction we want to take the country to".

Najib said this in his speech at a dinner last night at the BN Command Centre at Bukit Sentosa. Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, BN candidate P Kamalanathan, the BN secretariat and the election machinery of the component parties.

He said Hulu Selangor was now the centre of attraction of the country and following past practice and tradition, the prime minister should not be going on the ground during by-elections.

"But there is a difference in the Hulu Selangor by-election because it takes place in Selangor where I am the Selangor BN head and chairman of Selangor Umno," said Najib who returned home this morning after accepting the invitation of President Barack Obama to attend the Nuclear Security Summit and an official visit to Japan.

"I share the responsibility when the by-election occurs in Selangor. I have asked the opinion of the Hulu Selangor By-Election Committee chaired by Muhyiddin. I had asked whether it was appropriate for me to come down and assist the BN machinery in the by-election," he said.

Najib said the committee felt that it would be good if he could also join in. Furthermore, the heat from the by-election was not only felt in Putrajaya but also in Washington and Tokyo. I felt the heat and could not wait to come down here," he said.

"I should have come back this afternoon but I had left early and arrived at dawn because I wanted to be together with the by-election machinery. Malaysia is now at the centre of world attention and this is apparent when I was given the honour to have bilateral talks with president Obama during the Nuclear Summit," he said.

Najib said if Malaysia were being belittled as claimed by the opposition, Malaysia would not have been given the opportunity to be among the 40 countries invited to the conference, and he was among the nine leaders to have had bilateral talks with Obama.

"If we were worthless, he (Obama) would not have met me, but now, the opposition said I was being subservient to the United States. If there was no opportunity for bilateral talks with President Obama, then they would have said that the US president had no time for us.

"But when there is (bilateral meeting), they would then turn around the story. They will turn around everything. I wish to state that we will not be submissive to the US. We are equal," he pointed out.

"We don't have to agree on every single issue, we can disagree and be cordial about it. President Obama had also met with the Chinese president, does this mean that China is subservient to the US?" he asked.

At the conference, Najib said he had also pointed out that the peace talks in the Middle-East must go on.

"Don't be an expert manipulator. This touches on Malaysia's image. Now his friends (Anwar Ibrahim's) in the US know that he is a two-faced person because all this while there are leaders in the US, including Jews, who are his friends.

"He (Anwar) is too desperate to win in Hulu Selangor... he is hoping that the people will be taken in by his political game," he said.

On the by-election, Najib said there was only one major issue in the constituency and it concerned promises that had not been fulfilled.

"I want to tell the voters in Hulu Selangor that the Barisan Nasional will fulfil its promises. All this while, when we win in a constituency, we will fulfil what we promise," he said.

Najib also named Selangor Umno deputy chief Noh Omar as the man responsible for ensuring that all pledges made were fulfilled.

"If there is not enough allocation, I am prepared to approve it as the finance minister. This is the primary message I want to send to the voters here," he said.

Najib said he was also satisfied with the people's reaction towards Kamalanathan who had familiarised himself with the residents here.

On the PKR, he said it was in a chaotic situation now and he had now known the various secrets on the party from the member of parliament for Bayan Baru, Mohamed Hashim Zahrain and the member of parliament for Kulim-Bandar Baharu, Zulkifli Noordin, who had also joined the Malaysian delegation to the US.

"Every night after the programmes had been completed, they would sit down with me and tell everything that had transpired.

"But I don't want to disclose them here. Let me be the one to know, they know and Allah knows all," he added.

- Bernama