

## **Victory a welcome shot in the arm for BN, says Najib**

**Malaysiakini.com**

**Oct 12, 2009**

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The landslide win in yesterday's Bagan Pinang by-election is set to steer Barisan Nasional to greater heights and regain its old formidable form, said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today.

He described the victory as a timely confidence-booster to rejuvenate and resurrect the coalition to regain lost support.

"The result speaks for itself and gives us the confidence to surge ahead," he said, referring to BN's seven straight by-election defeats to Pakatan Rakyat since the March 8 general election.

Najib, the BN chairperson, said Isa Samad's big win was testimony to the people's acceptance of the federal government's 1Malaysia concept.

"It shows that the people, in the context of multi-racial politics, are beginning to appreciate our new policies, programmes and plans incorporated under the concept.

"The result showed that our new policies have been effectively implemented at the national, state and divisional levels," he told reporters in Penang.

Najib said besides the people's acceptance of 1Malaysia, Isa's popularity and track record as the former Negeri Sembilan menteri besar had played a major part in securing the big win for BN.

He ticked off critics, including the likes of Gua Musang parliamentarian Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (*right*), for accusing Umno of legitimatising corruption vis-à-vis Isa's win.

He said the federal constitution allowed even a criminal to contest in elections after five years of disbarment.

"Isa is not even an ex-convict. He only breached party ethics and disciplinary code on money politics. He had already paid his dues when he was suspended for it.

"We shall not sentence him again. He should be given another chance to serve the people and party," he added.

### **Pakatan's hypocrisy**

Najib chided the hypocrisy of Pakatan for embracing former de facto law minister Zaid Ibrahim who was also found guilty of the same offence by Umno previously.

"What's bad for Umno seems to be good for Pakatan," he said.

Najib said BN would not become complacent and rest on its laurels following the 5,435-margin victory by Isa over his rival, PAS' Zulkefly Mohamad Omar.

He said the coalition would carry out a post-mortem of the by-election to gauge the extent of the people's resurgent support for the ruling coalition.

The post-mortem, he said, would accumulate grassroots feedback on factors that led to the landslide victory and the needs and demands of the people from the federal government.

"The post-mortem will serve as a pointer to improve on the victory in Bagan Pinang. We shall also enhance cooperation and family spirit among BN component parties to strive to greater heights," he added.

Najib said BN would continue to serve the people, and constantly rectify its weaknesses in all areas to meet the rapidly changing aspirations of the rakyat.

Touching on Penang, he said the coalition would move ahead along the 1Malaysia concept and continue to serve the people to regain control of the state government.

"The state BN leaders have vowed to work closely to improve the coalition's political stake," he said.

Najib played down the reported internal rifts among Penang BN component parties and leaders, saying, "It is something that shall be collectively resolved within the family spirit."

Later the premier received Penang's highest award of Darjah Utama Pangkuan Negeri (DUPN), which carries the title Datuk Seri Utama, from governor Abdul Rahman Abbas.

The brief ceremony at the head of state's official Seri Mutiara residence, was witnessed by Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, state executive councillors and legislators.

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