

Senior party leaders welcome moves for reform

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Senior Umno leaders today praised Najib Abdul Razak's first policy speech as party president, where he vowed that Umno was on the road to reform, and also welcomed the constitutional amendments.

Below are some of their responses:

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, vice-president

The president's speech has allayed any fears that the party is a racist party which does not care about the interests of the other communities.

The reforms as proposed by the party show that the party needs to change and go according to the times.

The amendments to the party constitution are radical changes which have never been done before. It is hoped that these amendments would help increase the party membership and make it acceptable to all.

Shafie Apdal, vice-president

The president gave many examples of the challenges facing the economy and reminisced over the party's decline following the formation of splinter parties.

Despite the obstacles, we have managed to rise. This is where the party should head towards following the heavy defeat in the 12th general election.

The amendments involved are very radical as from 2,500 delegates deciding on the leadership of the party, it would be at the hands of 146,500 members who would determine the country's leadership. It is not an easy change as the party would have to mobilise people to count the votes.

Bung Mukhtar Radin, supreme council member

The Umno president has reminded members about the responsibilities we have to share. We have to get back the support of the people.

Presently, following the Bagan Pinang win, I believe that we are on the right road to recovery.

This shows Umno is still relevant and will continue to lead the country. The people are satisfied with Umno and Barisan Nasional's capabilities to administer the country.

Idris Haron, supreme council member

The president's advice for the members to be more sincere in the party struggle is timely as members have to always remain honest.

I also welcome his call to make the party more inclusive as it would further avoid the party from being compartmentalised.

This would benefit the people who want to join Umno and also play a role to contribute to society.

Saifuddin Abdullah, supreme council member

The president's speech represents the highest conviction that Umno plays in the community

and country. It paints a picture of having a just government that looks after the welfare of all the races.

At the same time, I hope that the members would study and adopt the party president's call on being a "centrist" party.

We are not leftist or right wing but a party which is in the middle.

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