

Ahead of the curve to transformation

The following is a translation of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's speech at the launch of the Government Transformation Programme at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday

WHEN we want to do something now, there will be those who ask why. Why does the government want to implement this GTP? Why must we do it?

There are two reasons. Firstly, the GTP embodies the wishes of the people, from what we have seen and evaluated. This is what the people want, and what they expect of the government of the day.

We have not done this randomly but through objective evaluation, culminating with the cabinet. We polled the ministers on what the people truly expected of the government.

We found that the ministers' evaluation was the same; as that of the people. Hence, there emerged the six NKRA that will be the primary area to be pursued by the government.

Secondly, we are on a journey. What kind of journey, and where to? I say here that this government is not a new government, but a continuity. That is why we have invited *two* prime leaders who have served our country. Former prime ministers Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi are here with us.

This is because the ultimate objective is for us to achieve Vision 2020, and this GTP is part of our agenda to be a progressive and high-income nation, God willing.

Secondly, I wish to note that in Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's tenure, if Vision 2020 was associated with 'fun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Tun Abdullah pushed his National Mission, especially to eradicate hardcore poverty, which is also among our six NKRA's.

That is our direction; why we want this programme, and secondly, how we are to achieve it. Hence, there emerged the proposal that we adopt a new methodology. As I have said, if our environment changes, our methodology must change. New environment, new methodology. Let it not be a new environment with the old methodology.

Our new methodology involves the NKRA and MKPI.

We also examined the experience of other nations. We invited an expert from the United Kingdom to brief us on what previous British prime ministers did.



Datuk Seri Najib Razak says the Government Transformation Programme is part of the national agenda to be a progressive and high-income nation.

He said yes, Britain had done this, but what we're attempting in Malaysia was more comprehensive and on a larger scale than was ever attempted in the United Kingdom.

What this means is, we are ahead of the curve of change compared with other nations. And I am sure this is what we should do, as Malaysia's history since Independence has been about change.

When we achieved independence without bloodshed but through negotiation in the concept of power-sharing, when we launched programmes like the Red Book, Felda and the like, winning the rights of the Semai community when we fought the communists, this was all part of Malaysia's curve of change.

We were ahead of the curve, and now with this programme to transform the government we are also ahead of the curve. God willing, our success will

how are the civil servants, are they committed? I guarantee that everyone from Chief Secretary Tan Sri Sidek down to the lowest levels of the public service is committed to the GTP.

The proof of this was when the ministers and I attended the NKRA labs, there was an extraordinary atmosphere. I went to all six labs and spoke with government officers.

These were not senior officers, they were middle-level, but they revealed extraordinary spirit. Some briefed us at length, rapid-fire. Some told me they had held meetings at 5am, which was unprecedented, such that the minister who is the chief driver, Datuk Seri Idris Jala, whom we borrowed from MAS, said they were better than MAS. This is the commitment of civil servants.

Our approach is two-pronged, that is, we must be big and we must be bold—the Two Bs. If we do this incrementally, it wouldn't be big and bold.

Being big and bold would mean the people will realise this is a big and meaningful change that will change our nation's socioeconomic landscape. With this programme, we are encouraging our ministers and civil servants to set better and higher targets, to constantly consider new ideas and whatever proposals that can help us achieve the overall objective.

have a great effect on changing our nation.

Very well, what is our commitment? We are committed to success, praise God, among these senior ministers, lead ministers, the six driving ministers with us in this hall and all other ministers are fully committed to this Government Transformation Programme.

We held discussions and workshops, five, six times; even on Sundays we conducted workshops. There, ministers complained and asked us not to have so many workshops but we persuaded them; we said, don't worry, don't give up. According to psychoanalysts, spirits are high when we're about to begin something, but when we begin the spirit declines. If we do it earnestly, however, spirits rise again. Today, our spirits have risen to make this transformation a success.

What's most important is,

P e o p l e t o d e c i d e i f w e h a v e f u l f i l l e d p r o m i s e s

• FROM PAGE 16

This is a reading of human psychology.

I wish now to speak of the six NKRA's, but not in any order of importance. They are all equally important.

Firstly, reducing crime. There are question marks. I have been given to understand that the national crime rate declined 6.7 per cent between the second and fourth quarters of 2009.

We have deployed more policemen from desk duties to patrols. Now thousands more are at 50 hot spots. We have also mobilised Rela and JPA personnel for patrols. We have also considered other actions, such as more CCTVs, special courts and the like. These are all part of our efforts to reduce the crime rate.

On combating corruption, the government is committed to improving our standing on Transparency International's corruption perceptions index. We can evaluate this from time to time, along with other actions we will take, such as

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— *Datuk Seri Najib Razak*
Prime Minister

ensuring that almost all government purchases are done on open or closed tenders, and for the successful ones to be displayed on websites so that everyone will know who receives government contracts.

We are also drawing up a "Whistleblowers Act" to encourage them to provide information to the authorities.



Thirdly, improving student achievement and access to quality education, for example raising pre-school enrolment from 67 per cent to 87 per cent in three years.

The announcement of the 20 high-performance schools has been made by the deputy prime minister and education minister. These 20 schools will

be the guldeposts for all schools on what can best be done, and be an inspiration to them.

We also wish to establish a new nexus with principals and headmasters, promising them greater rewards for better performance.

Fourthly, the living standards of low-income households we are considering under "E-Kasih", in which 44,000 will be helped out of poverty so we might eradicate hardcore poverty.

There are thousands more in the vulnerable group, susceptible to poverty, to whom we will give more attention in improving rural infrastructure.

The government is committed to emphasising the four basic needs of roads, houses, water and electricity for the entire nation, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, which are still lagging behind. We will grant a large allocation of nearly RM18 billion in three years for rural infrastructure development.

On public transport, we are

committed to increase the usage of public transport in the Klang Valley from 10 per cent now to 13 per cent in 2010 and 25 per cent by 2012.

We will also raise to 75 per cent the proportion of residents living within 400m of a public transport route in the Klang Valley.

The combined transportation terminal in Bandar Tasik Selatan will reduce congestion in the city centre. This will reduce the time spent waiting for buses, in more comfortable surroundings, with 200 new buses and 800 upgraded bus-stops.

We will also be providing 26 new train sets and four new coaches from the LRT Kelana Java terminus.

This is but a little of what we want to do. The details are on display. I want you to know that we are aware of the principle of openness and the responsibility of accountability. If we do this in a transparent way, the people will judge.

The people will decide whether or not we have fulfilled our promises to them,

in a parliamentary democracy, if the people think we have not kept our promises, then we must lace the risk. We are ready to be judged by the people when the time comes. This is our sincere commitment to the people.

We will also produce an annual review report. I am nervous about this, but it is all right. In the report, we will state how many people are no longer among the hardcore poor, how many children have registered for preschool education, how many people are using public transport, the corruption rate and others.

The people will be able to see all this, and that is why the government will not escape its responsibility.

Some may be cynical, as we are not sure how far the implementation will go. We want the people to see, feel and experience the implementation of the programmes. The government will not rest until this is done.

God willing, with the commitment of all, we will succeed.

• TURN TO PAGE 18, COL 1