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PM: Transformation to benefit rural folk, too

TRACK RECORD:
Govt's plans for the economy are realistic, says Najib

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PEOPLE in rural areas will not be sidelined as the Barisan Nasional government continues with its transformation plans for the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the government would tap into any potential for the benefit of the people and had a proven track record in managing its economy well.

He said there were countries in Europe in financial trouble because they spent more than their income but assured that this would not happen in Malaysia under the BN government.

"Malaysia is where it is based on the work of past leaders and the implementation of transformation

programmes."

The opposition, led by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, however, promised many things, such as doing away with tolls but failed to explain where the money would come from, he said.

"We cannot simply spend money just to gain support for elections or promise something that we cannot deliver," said Najib, who upon his arrival here yesterday launched the RM30 million Sabah Handicraft Centre, where some 12,000 people have been trained to enhance their skills in making and marketing their creations, before carrying out a groundbreaking of the Keningau Integrated Livestock Centre in Sook.

At the handicraft centre, Najib said focus would be given to the handicraft-making talents of the rural folk in Sabah.

"The people of Sabah deserve this centre and I am sure it can be further developed," he said, adding that this was part of a bigger agenda of transforming the state and the country to become a high-income nation.

"We do not want to see their creations being admired merely in the village or rural areas. We Want such talents to receive interna-

tional recognition," he said, adding that funds would be readily available for such plans.

Najib said RM20 million had been allocated by the government for a training programme for handicraft makers.

"This is all for the benefit of the people, no matter where they are in the country and it is based on sound ideas and plans that are realistic. These are not empty promises and we are not the type who only turn up when elections are near. What is important here is our track record and the ability of our leaders."

Najib called on the people to look back and evaluate the track record of Anwar, who had lied to the people on Sept 16, 2008.

He said that on that day, Anwar claimed that 30 Barisan Nasional parliamentary members would defect to the opposition parties, making it possible for Pakatan Rakyat to take over the Federal Government.

"This is the biggest lie in Malaysian political history. Can we forgive a leader who lied to the people. Let us not forget easily this historic incident."

Najib said opposition leaders, including their chief, came to

Sabah, especially with the approaching general election, to make promises to win the people's support.

"BN does not promise the sea and sky, but promises which can be fulfilled," he added.

He believed that people in Sabah were wise enough to differentiate between glass and crystal.

"If we evaluate a leader, we cannot just look ahead, but should also look back on his history and track record, not only when he is with the opposition, but also when he was in power."

Najib recalled the 1997 financial crisis when Anwar was then the finance minister and supported the International Monetary Fund.

Najib and his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor were accompanied by Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman, Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan as well as other state and federal cabinet leaders.

The prime minister also revealed that a RM235 million loan for a water treatment plant project had been approved by the Federal Government to boost water production in the district here.