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Najib: Things will only get better

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SARAWAK ELECTION:
Making right choice
will see continued
progress, says PM

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak rallied behind Tan Sri Adenan Satem, assuring the people that things can only get better if the state Barisan Nasional is retained in the upcoming state election.

By making the right choice, the people could be assured of continued progress and prosperity with Tan Sri Adenan Satem helming Sarawak under the BN flagship, he said.

"He has a good heart and is a good man who is popular. He is our partner in the federal leadership and I know he will secure a good future for the people of Sarawak," Najib said in his speech at a "meet the people" session here.

The prime minister, who was on a two-day visit to the state, said the plans and projects by the BN-led government would open up new areas and opportunities for the people, as well as uplift their welfare and improve education facilities for children across the state.

"I am a friend of Sarawak and I see the state government as a friend of the Federal Government. We support and complement each other.

"This state, apart from being the biggest in the country, has the biggest number of seats and I consider it the most important state.

"To build a strong (Federal) government, we need a strong state government. This is why Sarawak will always get my attention," said Najib.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at a 'meet the people' session in Bintulu yesterday. With him are Chief Minister **Tan Sri Adenan Satem** (front row, second from right) and Deputy Chief Minister **Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang** (front row, right). Pic by Mohd Radzi Bujang

He pointed out that for the state to reach its potential, it needed better connectivity.

"We need to build roads, bridges, telecommunication towers, bring clean water supply and electricity to rural areas to do this.

"This is not political rhetoric, I can do it. The Federal Government can deliver. We have delivered and we will continue to deliver," he said.

Before leaving for Kuala Lumpur after the gathering here, Najib visited the RM211 million Batang Sadong bridge, which is due for completion in August. The bridge in Sebuyau will cut travel distance by 100km once it is opened.

It was there where Najib said he was inspired to build a similar but bigger bridge in Batang Lupar, Sri

Aman, which would open up links to the vast coastline across the state.

He later brought it up with Adenan and both agreed to develop it on a 50-50 basis.

Najib also took time to see a dilapidated SK Sungai Ladang in Simunjan, which was built 59 years ago and pledged a RM15 million upgrade.

"When I entered the school, many others were advised not to go up as the structure may not hold us."

He said six new classes would be built in less than two months to improve the school's condition.

Najib said 107 schools in Sarawak would be upgraded in stages.

Rural areas with limited mobile phone access would also be getting better service soon, he said.

Najib said he would visit the state again with Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak to look into building more telecommunication towers.

Another pledge he made was an allocation of RM70 million for the state government to repair or rebuild longhouses.

He said the BN government would deliver what it promised and the RM16.4 billion Pan-Borneo Highway from Lundu to Lawas was an example.

"This is not a pipe dream or an empty promise. The highway is a reality and as long as BN is in power, it will make sure the highway is completed."

Another point Najib raised was

the ongoing three-phased devolution of powers discussion between the state and federal governments.

In the gathering here, Adenan had said the first phase of discussion saw 13 points agreed through cordial discussions among BN leaders.

The second phase of negotiations has started and it hinges on state rights under the Federal Constitution, while the third is on financial provisions.

Najib said the Federal Government had no problems looking back into the Formation of Malaysia Agreement and would even give back what was right if necessary.

"All these need more discussions, but the Federal Government will deal only with the BN government in Sarawak on this."