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'Political stability, peace key to growth'

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'SIAMESE TWINS':

The 2 pillars are inseparable, vital to spur development, says Najib

KUCHING

POLITICAL stability and peace are the two main pillars that are inseparable to accelerate the country's growth, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

Describing the pillars as "Siamese twins", Najib said it was impossible for the government to spur development without political stability and harmony among the people.

"Without political stability, there will be a lack of confidence in the country, and (with) that it will be impossible to attract investments to generate income for the people.

"And political stability does not mean anything if the peace enjoyed by the people is being threatened by unscrupulous groups, including religious extremists, trying to create disunity among people of different races and religions.

"That is why we must understand and embrace these 'Siamese twins', by retaining the present government and guarding the country's unity," said Najib at a gathering with the People's Volunteer Corps (Rela) members at the Borneo Convention Centre here yesterday.

Joining Najib and 12,000 volunteers, who were clad in their yellow berets and Rela uniforms, was Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also home minister.

Present were ministers from the federal and state governments, including Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam, Agricul-

ture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek, Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin, Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, and Ministers in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar and Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong.

Sarawak state secretary Tan Sri Mohamad Morshidi Abdul Ghani and Najib's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, were also present.

Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, called on Sarawakians to continue supporting the ruling coalition as it would develop the state.

He pledged that BN would continue to bring positive changes at a faster pace in Sarawak under the leadership of Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem.

"BN will continue to fight (in order) to win the election. We want to win 'in style', especially with the support of 342,000 Rela volunteers in the state.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his deputy Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi with the recipient of a wheelchair donated by the People's Volunteer Corps (Rela) during a gathering with Rela members at the Borneo Convention Centre in Kuching yesterday. Present is Rela director-general Datuk Kamariah Mohd Noah (left). Pic by Khairull Azry Bidin

"At the same time, I need Tok Nan (Adenan) since he had brought many changes in about two years. We do not need to reject the present government if we want changes to take place since it could be initiated within the system.

"However, only BN can bring changes and ensure continuity for sustainable development."

Najib later announced that Zahid's request for an allocation to buy Rela uniforms would be met.

"I want to announce the approval of RM10 million for the procurement of uniforms this year.

"I would like to also announce that another RM10 million would

be channelled next year for the same purpose."

On behalf of the state government, Najib said, a 15ha plot of land in Sematan near here had been set aside to develop a Rela training centre.

Earlier, Zahid said the country and state leadership would look after the welfare of Rela volunteers for their contributions and loyalty to the nation.

"All of you (Rela volunteers) are the nation's second line of defence after the armed forces and the police. In fact, you are the defender of the country at the grassroots level."