

'BOSSKU' MAKES THE CAMPAIGN ROUNDS

NSP- 17/11/2019 pg. 10

Najib's presence, however, will do little to sway voters, say analysts

T.N. ALAGESH
CAMERON HIGHLANDS
cnews@nstp.com.my

OVER the past few days, images of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak posing on a motorcycle, accompanied by the text, "Malu apa bossku", have been actively making the rounds on social media.

Najib had also uploaded a picture of him posing on a Yamaha Y150 motorcycle with the registration plate 8055KU (BOSSKU) on his social media accounts, which has since gained fame (or infamy) among the youths, especially the "kapcai" fraternity.

It all began with a seven-second video clip, where a youth recording the video was heard saying "bossku" before Najib, who was standing beside him, replied "malu apa bossku".

Since then, the tagline "Malu apa bossku" has been trending on social media.

The term "bossku", said to have originated in Sabah, is used to address a friend or a stranger in a respectful manner, similar to how "boss" is used even when calling your friendly neighbourhood "mamak".

It has since captured the imagination of youths here and permeated daily conversations in the peninsula. "Malu apa bossku" fever appears to have hit the Jelai state constituency ahead of the Cameron Highlands by-election.

Youths from Felda settlements here pepper their conversations with the phrase "bossku", while the elderly also use it liberally during coffee shop chats, with many claiming that Najib was responsible for the "bossku" phenomenon in town.

The excitement is palpable on the faces of Felda settlers in Felda Sungai Koyan here when told that Najib will be making his rounds in Jelai tomorrow and Saturday as part of his visit to Cameron Highlands ahead of the by-election.



Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak speaking at a special meeting with Umno members in Shah Alam on Monday. PIC BY FAIZ ANUAR



Najib's ongoing corruption charges appear to be of little concern to the locals, with many saying that Najib was "genuine" in helping Felda settlers when he helmed the government, and that he had introduced various forms of assistance for them, despite some of them not materialising.

Felda Sungai Koyan 2 settler Sulaiman Daud, 60, said they regard Najib favourably for what he had done to uplift the Felda community.

"No one is perfect, everyone has their ups and downs.

"We cannot judge him as a bad person... his father (Tun Abdul Razak Hussein) introduced Felda and his son was only doing his best to improve the schemes, and in fact he did bring in lots of changes," he said.

His friend Rosman Razak, 60, said the settlers were eager to meet Najib and hear his views on the current government.

"Despite being charged in

court, he is travelling around the country to meet the people and speak on various matters... You can't take away his character as a true leader.

"A majority of Felda settlers are indebted to him (for helping the Felda community)."

Najib is scheduled to be in Tanah Rata today before travelling to various parts of the constituency, including the Orang Asli settlements, tomorrow and Saturday.

Despite being looked upon favourably by a section of the Felda community, analysts believe that Najib's presence will do little in the grand scheme of things in the by-election.

Professor Dr Nik Ahmad Kamal Nik Mahmood, who is a political analyst and law lecturer from the International Islamic University, said Najib's presence in Cameron Highlands would only have a minimal impact in swinging votes to Barisan Nasional (BN).

He said Najib was present during the Sungai Kandis by-election in Selangor, but it did little to help BN's overall campaign, which ended in defeat.

"The Orang Asli and Indian voters might have a soft spot for him while the Malay voters are very quick to forgive him.

"It is very difficult to read the minds of the voters and Najib could have little impact on the voting trend in Cameron Highlands," he said.