

**Appreciate History Of Umno's Struggle, People Urged
Bernama
December 08, 2011**

LANGKAWI, Dec 8 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has urged the people to appreciate the history of Umno's struggle so that they would acknowledge its capability in helming the Barisan Nasional (BN) government.

The prime minister said by looking back at history, the people would realise the immensity of Umno's struggle all these years.

By appreciating history, the Malays would realise that they had no reason to forsake Umno, he said when opening Wisma Umno Langkawi in Kuah, here, today.

Najib said Umno and BN would continue to bring about change in the interest of the people in the battle-of-the-mindset era, for which until today Umno had emerged the winner through its outstanding ideas.

He believed the people would continue to have confidence in the ruling party amid the global scenario where a country saddled with political instability would also destroy the people's life.

Hence, Najib, who is also Umno president, said the people should appreciate what they now enjoyed due to BN's ability in leading the country.

On Langkawi, he said it had emerged as a popular international destination from an isolated island.

"In the 1960's, it took four hours to ply by ferry to this barren island, but now it takes only 45 minutes (from Kuala Perlis)," he said.

Najib said the price of land on this mythical island had shot up following development brought about by the government.

He cited a security guard, who led an impoverished life, but suddenly became a millionaire as his land in Padang Matsirat, Langkawi was bought for RM2 million due to development on the island.

"All these were due to the struggle of Umno and BN, which could feel the pulse of the people. No party (other than Umno and BN) could claim that they have done good deeds to the Langkawi community," he said.

Najib said that in the early 1980's, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had turned Langkawi into a duty-free island and now he (Najib) would continue efforts to ensure that Langkawi would remain on track for the better.

Najib said while striving for development, Langkawi should also protect the environment and improve the quality of life of the community.

"We do not want any environmental damage to the island. The people of the world demand high environmental standards," he said.

To make Langkawi a world-class destination, he said, the local community should have a world-class mindset and give priority to cleanliness.

He said tourists flocked to Langkawi for its natural beauty, which provided revenue for the tourism operators, and if cleanliness were to take a back seat, the number of visitors would decline and the operators' income would drop.

At the ceremony, the prime minister also presented allocations to build 17 jetties costing RM17 million to the Langkawi Area Fishermen's Association, and a cheque for RM782,000 for Tekun Nasional loans to 91 entrepreneurs.

Najib later toured the two-storey Wisma Umno Langkawi costing RM1.65 million before attending a feast at the premises.

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