

**No Age Limit For 'Winnable Candidate', Says Najib
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PUTRAJAYA, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today the term 'winnable candidate' used in the 13th general election refers to candidates who can win irrespective of their age or the number of terms they had served as elected representatives.

Acknowledging that the coming general election would be tough, the Prime Minister said what was important was that the individual nominated would be the best candidate for the Barisan Nasional (BN).

"Winnable candidates can refer to anyone, regardless whether he or she is young or old, there is no age limit, there is no limit on the number of times he or she has become an elected representative. The bottom line is that he or she is a winnable candidate.

"It is immaterial if people say he or she is a recycled candidate. Of utmost importance is that he/she is a winnable candidate because we want the BN to win handsomely in the coming general election," he said when delivering his message at the gathering with members of the Malaysian Council of Former Elected Representatives (Mubarak) at Seri Perdana, here Thursday.

Also present were Mubarak president Datuk Seri Abdul Aziz Rahman and Mubarak information chief who is also Bernama Chairman, Datuk Abdul Rahman Sulaiman.

Najib said he needed all the resources available and they comprised a mixture of the new and old guards who should join forces to campaign in the coming general election.

He said what was most important was to support winnable candidates determined by the party because the coming general election was considered to be tough.

"Previously, they (the opposition) did not have any state (except Kelantan), now they have four states, they have footholds, they have bases. Previously, they did not have a base, when they have bases, they can do many things.

"Even in terms of capacity, they are better than before. That's why we should not take the coming general election lightly," he said.

As such, he said, he welcomed the role of Mubarak to strengthen the party leadership following the rapidly changing socio-political landscape currently.

Najib said the changes were due to three factors, namely the rising standard of education, the information and communication technology (ICT) revolution, and the globalisation phenomenon or the borderless world.

He said this meant that the new generation today was a different generation and party members were reminded to be humble when they go down on the ground and convince the people that the present government was the best for the people.

In addition, he said party members must carry the label or brand that the BN was a catalyst to the transformation and changes that had been implemented all this while. "We have implemented many things which were ahead of time. We are the party that actually has the right to be named as the party that has brought about transformation and changes in the country.

"With our New Economic Policy, Vision 2020 and now the GTP (Government Transformation Plan), ETP (Economic Transformation Plan) and so on, we are consistent in continuing to be the party that brings transformation and changes," he said.

Najib said he approved the role played by Mubarak which did not duplicate the efforts made by the existing leadership especially at the state and divisional levels which should focus on the party structure.

He said Mubarak was looking at the target group by forging strategic alliances with the non-governmental organisations which had their own influence in determining the success of the party in the coming general election.

"Groups or existing bodies such as the Parent-Teacher Associations, Ex-Soldiers' Association, Ex-Policemen's Association as well as other groups that we can establish relations with.

"The same goes for the other ethnic associations such as the Chinese guilds and Indian associations which have a major influence. These groups are actually most important which should be made as our friends who can assist us when the time comes for the coming general election," he said.

In appreciating the role played by Mubarak, Najib said by opting for such an approach, there would not be any conflict or misunderstanding that could crop up in areas where there was already a "leader" in the divisional hierarchy.

He said what was important was the party's success, and now party members must strengthen the party leadership together with these groups because politics was a game of numbers, whereby whoever had more votes would emerge as the winner.

He said the country's political history had shown that politics was not permanent, something that was dynamic where the party with a more effective message for the people, and its leadership was acceptable to the public would be elected.

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