

Najib Says Very Important For BN To Be Re-elected To Deliver Transformation
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today stressed that it is "very important" for Umno and the Barisan Nasional (BN) to be re-elected in the next general election for the party to deliver the promised transformation.

The Umno president said re-election would also ensure that the nation's vision to be a developed country in 2020 can be achieved.

"We are embarking on this journey -- (of) economic, political and social transformation Umno will spearhead the nation's transformation together with our friends in the BN, and we will continue the march towards Vision 2020.

"But we have a little challenge ahead of us. We have to cross the bridge of the next general election. I keep saying it is not unimportant to be re-elected. It is very important to be re-elected. For us to deliver the real transformation, we need to be re-elected," he said.

Najib said this at the opening of the international forum on "Politics of Economic and Social Transformation in the Era of Global Crisis" in conjunction with the Umno General Assembly 2011, here.

Najib said the party needs the support of the people, and for that it must work and not harp only on what the party has done.

Instead, the party needs to show its earnestness to give the best for the nation, now and in the future, he said.

Sharing the story of Umno's journey as a political party, Najib said the wisdom of past leaders who made very courageous and visionary decisions and the party's willingness to reform were the secrets underpinning the party's success.

"The very fact that as a political party we are ahead of the curve, we were willing to reform, we were willing to change, that to me is one of the secrets underpinning our success as a political party," he said.

Umno, in its 65 years of existence and as the backbone of the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, has been in power continuously for more than 54 years.

Najib said Umno's willingness to reform and be ahead of the curve was seen as early as in the 50's when the past leaders decided to experiment with the formula of power-sharing so that the various ethnic groups in the country could be united through a political structure.

"In 1955, way back then, when nobody had thought about the concept, the terminology of power-sharing, our forefathers decided that we should share power.

"At that time, Umno and the Malays could have gone it alone. We could have decided that we want to rule this country. But our forefathers had the vision and courage to say 'look we

need to work together, the ethnic groups in this country must work together'," he said.

Najib said that as a result of that, Malaysia has avoided the inter-ethnic strife and conflict that was experienced in many countries and, at the same time, the formula has contributed to the country's long-term stability and survival.

Umno's willingness to be the pioneer of the concept has also resulted in it being accepted as a party that continues to be relevant with the times and even ahead of time, said Najib.

However, Najib said that as much as Umno could be proud of its past achievements, as a political party, it has to be mindful of the change in political landscape.

"The world has changed in many ways and, today, we are grappling with new challenges and Umno, as a political party, we have to continue to reform ourselves, we have to even re-invent ourselves and transform ourselves so that we can be seen as a dynamic party, and that is the biggest challenge for a party that has been in power for so long," he said.

Najib said that after going through many eras, from fighting for independence, against communism, bringing development and industrialisation, Umno is now heading to an exciting phase as this would be the final leg of what is deemed to have really excited and united Malaysians.

"When my predecessor Tun Dr Mahathir (Mohamad) announced a new national vision in 1993, Vision 2020, it excited the nation. Like when President Kennedy said 'let us put a man on the moon', that galvanised the entire United States nation.

"I told Dr Mahathir 'you did the easy part, you did the 'what' part, but I have to do the 'how' part," he said in jest.

Najib, however, indicated that the government has discovered the "how" part in becoming a fully developed nation, that is to ensure economic growth remains at six per cent per year, to invest RM1.4 trillion in the next 10 years, create 1.2 million jobs and raise per capita income from about US\$7,000 per capita to US\$15,000.

"That is, in a nutshell, what we have to do, the how part, for us to raise investment, foreign direct investment, bring about innovation, changes in the government, make ourselves more competitive, deregulate and make ourselves break up the old monopoly," he added.

Optimistic of achieving the vision, Najib said: "We have the how plan because we have a very crystal clear roadmap to get us to Vision 2020, to accomplish the goal of being a fully developed high-income nation".

Touching on claims by certain quarters that elections in the country are not conducted fairly, Najib strongly challenged them to produce their proof.

"You mean if we can manipulate, we won't win all the states? Do you think that we will give up some of the important states if we can manipulate? Show me the proof, if you say elections are not fair in Malaysia, show me the proof," he said.

Najib said the government is not afraid of introducing reforms, and cited the setting up of the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) on Electoral Reform as one of the government's commitments for electoral reform.

While vowing that political reform would continue, Najib referred to certain quarters which claimed Malaysia practised draconian laws.

"They want to show defiance, we will designate areas for you to show defiance. Yet, they are twisting the facts, saying Malaysia's laws are more draconian than Myanmar's.

"But all we are saying is that when there is designated area, you can have your rally at any time. Only in undesignated areas do we ask for 10 days (notice) so that we can ensure a peaceful assembly," he said.

Najib said that as much as the government respects the rights of an individual, it must also ensure that the rights of the community are not violated.

The government recently tabled the Peaceful Assembly Bill 2011 in parliament, aimed at ensuring that all citizens have the right to organise or participate in assemblies in a peaceful manner and without arms, subject to certain restrictions deemed necessary in the interest of security and public order, as stated in Clause 2 Article 10 of the Federal Constitution.

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