

**Several Sabah Leaders Question Accuracy Of Survey On PM's Popularity  
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KOTA KINABALU, Aug 31 (Bernama) -- Several Sabah leaders today questioned the accuracy of a survey which showed that the popularity of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has dipped.

They said Najib's popularity among the people was "growing more than ever" and he was seen as the people's leader.

Their response comes in the wake of a survey conducted by the Merdeka Centre for Opinion Research which reported that Najib's rating dropped six per cent, from 65 per cent in May 2011 to 59 per cent in August.

In an immediate reaction yesterday, Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim questioned the sampling used in the survey, saying that it had not considered the rural community, the Indian community in perspective, and the community in Kuala Lumpur which strongly supported the prime minister.

Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) president Tan Sri Joseph Kurup said that based on his (Kurup's) interaction with the people on the ground, the prime minister had a high popularity rating.

The prime minister was a "simple" person who was close to the people and understood them so that he could obtain sufficient feedback for planning, he said when met at the Aidilfitri open house hosted by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman and state cabinet ministers at the Likas Sports Complex, here. More than 40,000 people attended the open house, from 10 am to 2 pm.

Kurup, who is Deputy Natural Resources and Environment Minister, said Najib was an innovative leader who ensured that all development in the country reached the grassroots, including those in the rural areas.

Sabah MIC chief Datuk V. Jothi agreed with Dr Rais that the result was not reflective of the Indian community's sentiment as this group was actually renewing its support for the Barisan Nasional (BN) after seeing Najib's effort to unite all the communities.

"He (Najib) has always been accommodating. He wants to give more chances to every race; no race has been left out. The Indians are very supportive of the prime minister and the present government. They are actually coming back to BN. They realise that only the BN can bring them progress," he said.

Sabah BN Secretary Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan said the popularity survey depended much on current issues.

"As we know, in the past few months, the opposition has been mounting a rigorous anti-Najib campaign starting off with Bersih 2.0 and that has somewhat given a negative perception about the administration and about the prime minister.

"But, seriously, to have a prime minister having more than 50 per cent support is a big

achievement under the current political scenario in our country.

"So, it could be a bleep on the radar, but I think he has been consistent in his approach over time as we approach the next elections. I think the true support for the prime minister will materialise and that is what matters," said the Kota Belud MP.

Gerakan Sabah chairman Datuk Gordon Leong said that "when one looks around, the people in fact really love the prime minister.

"If you look at the reaction of the people whenever Najib visits Sabah, it is clear that he is widely respected. Everywhere he goes, people are rushing to shake hands with him. So, how can you then say that he is not so popular anymore. The concept of 1Malaysia has been widely accepted in Malaysia and the National Key Results Areas (NKRA) have actually produced a lot of results.

"He is doing something about the country, but it takes time. He has the people in mind and he truly wants to help the country. Let him perform, let him do his bit. I think it's wrong to say his popularity has dropped. My opinion is that it has not dropped, in fact the people love him," said Leong.

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