

**PM: Barisan to continue developing rural areas**  
**TheStarOnline**  
**April 28, 2012**  
**By ANDY CHUA**

SIBU: The Barisan Nasional wants to continue with its development agenda for the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"We want you to give us another mandate not because we are power crazy or because we want to make empty promises like the Opposition. We want you to put us in government again as we have a big agenda for development. Our vision is to turn the country into an industrialised nation by 2020," he said.

Najib said this during his meet-the-people session in Kabong, a rural agricultural sub-district, some 200km from here, yesterday.

Najib the first Prime Minister to set foot in Kabong said the Barisan would never make empty promises to get support.

"The Opposition made a lot of empty promises during the last election. So do not be cheated by them again. If we play the game of giving empty promises, in the end, the people, especially those in the rural areas, will suffer.

"If we have your support, we will be able to provide more basic amenities such as electricity and clean water supply," he said.

He, however, believed that when the election was called either "next month, or in two or three months or next year", the rural populace, including in Kabong, would continue to give their votes to the Barisan.

He said the Barisan would never neglect implementing projects in the area or any rural area in the country as it wanted a balanced development with rural areas enjoying the same development as urban areas.

"When I became the Prime Minister on April 3, 2009, my wish was to ensure that the development agenda was extended to the rural areas also. During the last three years, we have done a lot for the rural areas and if we are given another mandate, we will continue to do more," he added.

To prove his point, he said he had brought along Rural Development Minister Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal and Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Douglas Uggah with him for his visit to Kabong to study what needed to be done.

He announced an allocation of RM35.5mil for upgrading and construction of roads, drainage systems and flood mitigation plans.

Earlier on his arrival, the Prime Minister was given a rapturous welcome by the people who lined the street to meet him.

Among those present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud and Social Development Minister Tan Sri William Mawan Ikom.

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