

Make Right Choice For Continued Progress, Najib Tells People
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak called on Malaysians to make the right choice in the next general election, saying it was vital to ensure continued progress of the country.

"Please make the right choice. If you are at a crossroad, make the right turning. If you make the right turning, I'm confident that we will transform Malaysia.

"We will be in the forefront of the nation; we will succeed in making Malaysia a high-income nation that we can be proud of," he said when opening the one-day "Malaysian Chinese at the Political Crossroads" conference jointly organised by the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute and the MCA think-tank, Insap, here Saturday.

Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, said the next general election was not about him but about the future of Malaysia.

And thus, he said, he is seeking the mandate of the people since he already has the mandate from BN and Umno, of which he is the president.

"With your mandate, I pledge to you, I will do my utmost to make Malaysia a great nation," he said.

He said the government will always listen to the people, including the Chinese community.

"I'm listening and I like to do it even more, but I can only do more if I have the support of the people.

(Therefore) I'm seeking the mandate of the people for the first time," he said.

Najib will be leading Umno and BN into his first general election as the prime minister, having assumed the post in 2009. The last general election was held in 2008.

Najib said that as the government listens to the people, any demand that is fair and reasonable will be made a part of policy.

Citing Chinese education, the prime minister said Malaysia is the only country outside China that has supported the existence and development of Chinese schools.

Today, he said, the question is no longer on the existence of Chinese schools but more about getting funds and teachers for the schools.

Najib said this was the result of his stand on taking a political risk by amending the Education Act to allow the existence of Chinese schools when he was the education minister. Najib was education minister from May 1995 to November 1999.

"The existence of Chinese schools is no more in doubt. They are now an integral part of our national education system," he said.

Najib also said that the changes and transformation initiated by the BN government benefited Malaysians more than the reformation being harped on by the opposition.

The BN leadership also ensures that growth for the people is implemented systematically, unlike the "reformasi" (reformation) movement of the opposition which prefers to take to the streets to create disorder and chaos in the country, he said.

The Chinese community cannot benefit if the country is in chaos. Even (when there is) a mere uncertainty, the shares will plummet, he said.

Najib said Malaysia could not afford to be in the hands of the opposition whose leaders could not only not reach consensus on their stand but also demonised the BN government to get support from the people.

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