

Najib The PM Who Listens To The People - Ghani Gilong
Bernama
April 19, 2012
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KOTA KINABALU, April 19 (Bernama) -- According to veteran Sabah political stalwart Tan Sri Abdul Ghani Gilong, the 1Malaysia Concept is the best idea for building Malaysia into a country which is unified and successful.

Abdul Ghani, who served as a federal minister until 1978, also is impressed with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who he describes as a leader who listens to the people.

"Personally, I am impressed with him (Najib) as being a good prime minister," Abdul Ghani, 79, shares with Bernama at his residence on Bukit Bendera here.

Abdul Ghani says the 1Malaysia Concept and National Transformation Programme are brilliant ideas and, based on this, he thinks the Barisan Nasional (BN) would win comfortably in the 13th General Election in Sabah and the rest of the country.

This is reinforced by the able leadership of Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman, who has successfully strengthened Sabah's economy and turns the state political scenario into one having a stable environment which is conducive for investments and development in the state.

Abdul Ghani is among four of the 'Tokoh Malaysia' (Eminent Malaysian) Award Recipients, in conjunction with the Malaysia Day 2010 celebration.

"The concept (1Malaysia) is both good and brilliant, as it provides an understanding that we are Malaysians who must be one at heart, united in coming to the best for the interest of our nation, including avoiding chaos and racial conflict," says Abdul Ghani.

SABAH POLITICS

Since venturing into politics in 1963, among the federal-level minister's posts that he held were Sabah affairs minister, works minister and transport minister.

Then, as a prominent Sabah leader and politician, he played a key role in various dialogues and consultations on the formation of Malaysia.

Even though Abdul Ghani is no longer active in politics, he always follows political developments in the country and to him, the people's acceptance of the government is a positive development, including in Sabah.

"Despite a lot of accusations from the opposition, to me as a normal person, people will return to the BN as they understand what is being claimed by the opposition as being false. The issue is that whatever they (opposition) say, they will not be able to meet the promises," he says.

Abdul Ghani says in terms of development, before Sabah joined Malaysia and since then, the difference was vast.

"During that time (before joining Malaysia), Sabah lagged in development, particularly in terms of infrastructures such as roads and schools, but now there is much progress.

"I am a Sabahan who follows (political) developments in the state, including the move to join Malaysia, and that is how I know what we were at that time and now," he says.

Abdul Ghani sees the opposition ploy in the 'Malaysian Agreement' issue, as federal and state authorities are continuously seeking to resolve matters via discussions and negotiations.

WHY BARISAN NASIONAL?

On why the Sabah people should return the BN in the coming General Election, Abdul Ghani says only the BN can meet the pledges made to the people of Sabah as well as their wishes.

"In Sabah, there is a lot of development implemented by the state government under the leadership of Musa, apart from placing the state's financial standing on firm footing along with the significant development transformation," he explains.

Abdul Ghani says the people are aware that assistance from the Government, such as the RM500 from the 1Malaysia People's Assistance Programme (BR1M) for households, assistance of RM100 for school students, and RM200 book vouchers for university students, are for their benefit under the national transformation process.

"This national transformation programme is very good and we hope to achieve its objective," he says.

BN'S STRATEGY

On BN's strategy to ensure its victory in the 13th General Election, Abdul Ghani says BN should ensure that all of its pledges are met.

"This is so, as the people know how to evaluate the government's performance...if they feel that they are sidelined, then they would have switched to other parties, particularly those in the opposition.

"Therefore, the government of the day should be sincere in meeting what is hoped for by the people to ensure continued support," he says.

Abdul Ghani also advises young voters to think wisely and look far ahead into the future.

"Otherwise, they are not able to see uncertainties that happen (in other countries). (Other than that) young people should be provided with a clearer and more meaningful picture, and this means they should also have a sense of responsibility as citizens of this nation.

"I call on them to support the government's efforts that have given our country many living benefits and comforts. The advantage held by the BN government now is its willingness and seriousness in hearing out the people's issues, including those of the younger generation, and proceed to correct the situation." he adds.

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