

**SWP's BN-friendly Claims Illogical, Irrational - Najib
Bernama
June 3, 2012**

JULAU, June 3 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has described new opposition party, Sarawak Workers Party (SWP)'s claims of being Barisan Nasional (BN)-friendly as illogical and irrational, as the party, in the same breath, wants to contest all six seats belonging to BN component party Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS).

"SWP cannot claim to be BN-friendly when it wants to contest against the BN. Such action is obviously not consistent.

"If it is really BN-friendly, what is wrong in supporting all BN candidates. That is the crux of the issue," the prime minister told a media conference Sunday.

Earlier, he had attended the PRS Gawai Dayak Open House at Rh.Jana anak Saweng, a 77-door Iban longhouse in Batu Matop near here.

Najib, who is also BN chairman, said even if SWP managed to win any seat in the coming general election, it would not be invited to join the BN.

"There is no question of joining the BN. The important thing is to support all BN candidates.

"Otherwise, if they plant their candidates, the votes will be split. My advice to the people of Sarawak is for them to support only the BN," he said.

SWP is led by former two-term Pelagus state assemblman Larry Sng Wei Shien, who is also a former assistant minister in the Chief Minister's Office.

He was sacked from PRS in 2007, over a leadership dispute with its president, Tan Sri Dr James Jemut Masing.

Earlier in his speech, Najib denied that he, as BN chairman, and Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud as state BN chairman, had endorsed the setting up of SWP.

"We only recognise and support the PRS, PBB (Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu), SUPP (Sarawak United People's Party) and the SPDP (Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party).

Asked if the time was opportune for the 13th General Election to be held soon, Najib replied in jest that the Gawai Festival should be allowed to continue first.

Julau Member of Parliament Datuk Joseph Salang also joked with Najib that the number, '7', was auspicious to the Ibans, implying that the general election could be held next month.

Najib also said he believed the state BN would do well in the election, based on the strength of the BN and support of the people on the ground.

"Based on these, there is no reason why the BN cannot do well in the state...but we need to work hard till the end," he said.

On his personal view of the Gawai Festival, Najib said it was a celebration full of culture and

traditions of the Ibans.

He described the Ibans as "very friendly and hospitable", especially to outsiders.

The prime minister noted that the Ibans were excited that he and Abdul Taib had visited them at two longhouses here and at the Betong community hall in Betong.

"They had prepared themselves very well and extended a very warm welcome to us and all visitors," he said.

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v6/newsindex.php?id=670606>