

**Najib's Visit To Kota Belud Shot In The Arm For BN - Salleh
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By Newmond Tibin**

KOTA BELUD (Sabah), Sept 4 (Bernama) -- The visit of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to Kota Belud last Sunday to attend an Aidilfitri gathering has been described as a major coup for the ruling coalition as well as a fitting tribute to the people of this Barisan Nasional (BN) bastion.

United Sabah Bajau Organisation (Usbo) president Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak said the people in the district came off buoyed by the message given by Najib at the mammoth gathering.

Najib and his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, had attended the joint Aidilfitri "open house" of Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia and Usbo, of which Pandikar is the deputy head.

"The PM was visiting the birthplace of Sabah Umno and paid tribute to the people of Kota Belud who had voted for the Umno candidate in a by-election in 1991 which saw the party gain its foothold in the state," Salleh told Bernama, here, today.

Salleh, who is also Sabah Umno liaison deputy chief, said the visit would also spur the BN component parties to go all-out to ensure that all the four seats there remain with the coalition after the next general election.

The three state seats in the Kota Belud parliamentary constituency are Usukan, Tempasuk and Kadamaian. In the last general election, in 2008, all the state seats and the Kota Belud parliamentary seat were won by BN candidates.

On reports that the general election would be held in November, he said it was best left to the wisdom of Najib and the BN leadership but members should be on guard and be prepared to face the electorate when the time comes.

Salleh also agreed with Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman on the need for the people to retain the BN in power, not only in Sabah, but also in Putrajaya.

Musa, in his speech at the Libaran, Kinabatangan, Sandakan, Batu Sapi and Beluran Umno delegates meetings officiated by Najib earlier on Sunday, had said that the people wanted development, prosperity, peace and harmony.

"He (Najib) has helped fishermen, farmers and padi planters. He has also helped the people in the villages and in the towns, children, the elderly, pensioners and even taxi drivers," Musa had said in his speech.

Salleh pointed out that while the opposition continued to hoodwink the voters by making lots of pledges, Najib was busy implementing projects and programmes that brought actual benefit to the people.

He also said that Sabah under Musa's leadership also benefited from the state government's initiatives, in particular programmes to boost the economy and standard of living of the people.

"I cannot but agree with (Datuk) Musa that Sabah and its people would suffer a setback if they pick the wrong party and leader to form the government after the general election," he added.

On the joint Aidilfitri open house, Salleh humbly apologised for any shortcomings as the organisers did not expect a big turnout.

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