

**BUDGET: Retain BN In Power to Further Improve What We Have Today, Urges
Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28 (Bernama) -- Tabling Budget 2013, the last budget before the next general election, in the Dewan Rakyat today, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak urged the people to retain the Barisan Nasional in power in the 13th general election "to further improve what we have today". He said an important question to ask in making a decision at the ballot box was whether life today was better than yesterday, and whether tomorrow gave hope that was full of possibilities and potential. "If the answer is yes, please give the mandate to the present government to further improve what we have today, without any hesitation," he said when tabling Budget 2013, totalling RM251.6 billion, in the Dewan Rakyat. In concluding his budget speech, Najib, who is also the finance minister, said Budget 2013 was among the series of budgets that would propel "this beloved nation" towards achieving the national vision. "As a party with the mandate, we urge the rakyat to evaluate critically and rationally each and every successful record of the Barisan Nasional. Over the last 55 years, the Barisan Nasional government and the earlier Perikatan (Alliance) government have created a better quality of life for the rakyat," he said. Najib said the fact that the people had given the BN government the mandate 12 consecutive times since 1959 meant that the right thing was done by the present government.

"We are aware that there are parties requesting to be given a chance to form the next government. In a democratic country, we understand that they too have their rights. "It is the rakyat who ultimately decide who will be given the mandate through the ballot box," he said, adding that the time had arrived when every rakyat would soon make a choice in determining the future as well as that of their children. The present mandate of the government expires on April 28 next year.

Najib, who is also BN chairman, said the BN government was not without fault, "but what differentiates us from others is that they do not have the courage to accept mistakes.

"On the other hand, they make excuses and find fault in others."

The prime minister said that, ultimately, parties that offered an alternative must also be evaluated on their merit.

"The rakyat knows them well. Among them, there are those who were trusted as leaders to manage the nation's wealth. Furthermore, in many states, they are heading the government," he said.

"If today they make promises, the rakyat must ask why this leadership, while in power, did not take any action. When they had the opportunity, and did not implement what they promised, what guarantee is there that they will fulfil promises when they are in power?" he asked. Najib said further: "Wasn't it during the Asian financial crisis that the country was almost destroyed? And today, in the states that are administered by them, their manifestos contain only promises. Can they be trusted when in power?"

The prime minister said this was contrary to the conduct of the BN government.

"When we make promises, we fulfil them. As a matter of fact, even before making promises, we are responsible in ensuring that we are capable of fulfilling them. In trying to win, they are willing to do anything, but when they win, all their promises will be forgotten," he said. Najib said the BN government had never promised the moon, the stars or the galaxy.

"We have never painted a pretty picture based on wishful thinking. As a responsible government, we continue to speak the truth, even though it may be unpleasant. We have never misled the rakyat with tall tales. On the other hand, we have always offered solutions and provided good leadership to every problem faced by the rakyat," he said.

Quoting Plato's "The measure of a man is what he does with power", Najib said there were parties who were willing to sacrifice everything simply for the sake of power.

"The BN government is guided by "fastabiquil khairat" as written in the Quran that I had recited earlier, which is to do good," he said.

Najib also hit out at certain quarters which had proposed the abolition of the National Higher Education Loan Fund (PTPTN) loans, saying that it was most irresponsible because abolishing the loans would mean that Malaysians would be burdened with the more than RM30 billion PTPTN loans.

He said the BN government fostered racial unity, which was the basis for national stability.

"However, others who want to be in power are sowing seeds of conflict and hate. This government has been accused of several wrongdoings according to their whims and fancy.

"Thus, I urge Malaysians to judge the BN government on its merits. Please join my colleagues and I to fulfil our potential towards developing a country that we can be truly proud of.

"A country where the weak are protected, those in need get help, the strong protect, the young loved, the elderly valued, those in need assisted, and those with potential given opportunities.

"Truly, we want Malaysia to be well known internationally, (to be) prosperous and peaceful. With His Blessings, and the support of the rakyat, we will make it a reality. To You, Allah (God), we submit," he said in ending his speech.

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