

**'Economist' can't compare Najib to Brown, says BN
Malaysian Insider
October 06, 2012
By Md Izwan**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 6 — The Economist is wrong to compare Datuk Seri Najib Razak to former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown as the political situation in both countries are different, Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders said today.

An editorial in the global business magazine's October 6 edition said while the Malaysian prime minister fancied himself more like Tony Blair, another former British PM, he now appeared to "increasingly" resemble Brown, who lost the United Kingdom's 2010 general election which was called at the last possible time.

"It is wrong and nonsensical to do a comparison between Malaysia and Britain. The national political situation and general election are not similar at all. So how can you compare Najib to Brown?" BN secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor (picture) told The Malaysian Insider.

"The prime minister won't call an election because he is scared, but the government is committed to keeping its promises to the people first to ensure they are comfortable and ready for the future.

"We are not like the opposition who keeps making promises but never keeping them. Look at what is happening to Selangor and Penang," Tengku Adnan said, referring to two states currently governed by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) governments.

The Umno secretary-general's views were echoed by MIC Youth deputy chief V. Mugilan who said both the style of government and politics in Malaysia were not the same as the United Kingdom since achieving independence.

"In Malaysia, since independence until now BN has always been the federal government. How do you compare Malaysia to Britain which has had so many changes in government after a general election," Mugilan said.

He also insisted that Najib was not afraid to call for an election but instead it was the opposition which was afraid to face-off in the national polls.

"If we look at Selangor, the state government wants to hold a separate state election instead of a simultaneous one with the general election which proves they are afraid of it and not BN.

"Najib as prime minister has his own strengths. I see the Indian community now backing him again for his policies and programmes which benefit all without exception," Mugilan said.

In the editorial headlined "No time like tomorrow", The Economist said that "talk of an early election for Najib to secure his own mandate first surfaced towards the end of 2010."

"He himself began to talk up his chances the following June. Then an election was expected towards the middle of this year. All along, Malaysia has been on an election footing, with the cautious Mr Najib ponderously cultivating the voters," it added.

The magazine pointed out that the problem for Malaysia was that the rival parties have been at such a high pitch of combat-readiness for such a long time that the resulting partisanship is poisoning national politics.

"Pretty murky at the best of times, politics is becoming dirtier by the day. Umno and its friends in the press and television have been relentless in their assaults on any organisation, such as Bersih, that is deemed to be sympathetic to the opposition.

"All the old canards about these sorts of groups being in the pay of Zionists, America or George Soros, a foreign financier, have been trotted out. It is not clear whether such slanders still impress Malaysia's voters, especially its Muslims. They are certainly a sign of desperation," it concluded.

In an interview aired by CNBC today, Najib said he hoped to be given a strong mandate in the upcoming 13th general election to continue to deliver to the people and make Malaysia a fully developed nation by 2020.

"I'd like to have a strong mandate, Martin (referring to interviewer Martin Soong). Because to achieve our vision of a fully developed nation by 2020, the next five years would be very crucial. Crucial, because you're talking about the last lap.

"You're talking about going down the stretch and this is the most critical part because we really have to deliver," he was quoted as saying by national news agency Bernama.

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