

**Winds Of Change Blowing Towards Barisan Nasional
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 26 (Bernama) -- Choosing the tagline of 'Fulfilling Promises' as the foremost important agenda, the Barisan Nasional (BN) has touched the hearts of many Malaysians regardless of age, gender, religion and living standards with continuous efforts for the betterment of all.

Placing importance on welfare, none of the people had been left behind including students, women, senior citizens, entrepreneurs, civil servants and youths under the BN government.

Looking back in the early part of 2012, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is also the BN chairman, had felt the hardship faced by fishermen, and had distributed aid ranging from RM5,000 to RM10,000 to them throughout the country to repair their homes, on Jan 21.

The aid was part of the RM300 million Special Fund for Fishermen's Housing, which was announced in the 2012 Budget last year.

To further reduce the burden of the people, the government had continuously assisted the rakyat through programmes such as the Perumahan Rakyat 1Malaysia (PR1M), Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia (KR1M), Kedai Kain Rakyat 1Malaysia, Kedai Buku 1Malaysia, Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M), Skim Amanah Rakyat 1Malaysia (SARA 1Malaysia), Transformasi Kedai Runcit (TUKAR) and Menu Rakyat 1Malaysia (MR1M).

As a result of the BN's sincere move to improve the wellbeing of the people, the wind of change began to appear within the BN, including in the states ruled by the opposition pact.

A very recent report showed that about 400 hardcore PAS members in the Semerak state constituency in Kelantan had joined Umno, saying they had been duped by the so-called "Amanat Haji Hadi" (Haji Hadi Message), which branded Umno members and supporters as infidels.

Even the majority of over 30,000 teachers in the state were now BN supporters, a good sign that BN is capable of wresting Kelantan from the opposition.

Kelantan Umno liaison deputy chief, Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin said they were also willing to work hard to ensure that BN would be back in power after the general election since the current federal government had taken their (teachers) interest into consideration and fulfilled all promises made.

In Penang, hundreds of hardcore supporters of the opposition party showed interest in joining the BN after losing their hope in the DAP leadership.

This had become a reality when almost 350 former Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) members from Bayan Baru, Bukit Gelugor and Jelutong submitted their application letters to rejoin Umno to Najib on Dec 8.

Describing Penang as a Gerakan stronghold for 40 years before losing to DAP in the 2008 general election, Gerakan president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said the party was determined to do more and better for the people in Penang and asked voters to give the party a chance in the 13th general election to serve them.

Close to their hearts and minds, Gerakan members and Malaysians were saddened by the demise of its former president Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik, 73, one of the political giants and longest serving Chinese minister in Malaysia, last Saturday.

Back on track, a positive sign was also seen in Kedah and Selangor through surveys done by several academicians in the middle of the year.

Associate Professor Dr Rohana Yusof from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) said a recent survey showed that 70 per cent of 10,800 respondents in Kedah had no confidence in Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's leadership.

According to the survey, the respondents felt that it was pointless for the current PAS government in Kedah to continue ruling the state and therefore, the BN government would be the best choice for the development of Kedah and the country in general.

In Selangor, a simulation study done based on the previous 11th and 12th general election and with the latest registered voters' profile, showed that BN could win 40 state seats during the coming general election.

Taking all these scenarios into consideration, the coming 13th general election could be shaky for the opposition pact of PKR-DAP-PAS to retain the states currently under their rule especially in Selangor where the outcome is said to be a 50-50 chance.

Evaluating support given by all the ethnic groups, the Indians were the biggest swingers in the last general election but they appeared to be withdrawing their support for the Pakatan due to the frustration of being cheated with empty promises.

A noticeable trend swept through the 2008 polls when almost 85 per cent of the Indian votes went to the opposition pact, as a result of issues played up by the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf).

Thereafter, the Indian community's support for the BN had risen to over 70 per cent following government aid amounting to RM415 million being given to improve their living standard.

The aid was distributed via Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia or AIM (RM100 million), Tabung Ekonomi Kumpulan Usahawan Malaysia or Tekun (RM65 million) and a RM250 million allocation to entrepreneurs.

During the 66th MIC Annual General Assembly held on Dec 9, party president Datuk Seri G. Palanivel said the support was stronger for the ruling coalition after receiving considerable benefits, particularly in education, public service development programme, economy and social programmes initiated by Najib.

Meanwhile, MCA deputy president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai also expressed his confidence that MCA, which took a severe beating in 2008, would rise again in the next general election.

With plenty of aid given through 1MCA Medical Foundation, allocations for education and entrepreneurs, the Chinese community saw the winds of change blowing in the level of support towards the government compared to 2008.

In Sabah, its chief minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman believed that the state had grown as a progressive, prosperous, peaceful and stable state under the initiatives taken by BN.

The establishment of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the issuance of citizenship to illegal immigrants, appointing locals to helm Federal departments in the state and the recognition of Sept 16 as Malaysia Day proved that BN always listened, cared and worked to fulfill every request made by the people.

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