

Najib: Umno and BN offer Malaysians the best
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DATUK Seri Najib Tun Razak told voters that they face a choice in the next general election between a proven Barisan Nasional and an inconsistent Opposition that has a track record of unfulfilled promises.

Opening the last Umno general assembly before the polls, the party president said: "The choice before you is between Barisan Nasional as a party with holistic plans for the future of the country and an Opposition that is chaotic and confused about its aim of whether to make Malaysia secular, theocratic or a welfare state."

Urging Malaysians not to gamble with their future, the Prime Minister and Barisan chairman said they should not look upon the election as an experiment.

Najib began his 90-minute speech by reminding Umno members that unity and discipline were key to success in the polls to come, with Parliament's term expiring on April 28.

"Now that the war drums have been sounded, it is time to prepare our strategy and consolidate our team ... and return to the people to renew our mandate," Najib said.

He then appealed directly to the audience beyond Dewan Merdeka at the Putra World Trade Centre, presenting his case on why Umno and Barisan were the only viable choice for the country's 13.1 million voters.

"We believe that Malaysians have a right to get the best Government and we are certain that it is Umno and Barisan which are capable of offering the best for Malaysians," he added.

Najib said there was a view that it was not wrong to give an opportunity to the Opposition to hold power to evaluate their capability in managing the country.

"The risk is high because the future of the country, our families and children is too valuable to be made the subject of an experiment," he said.

The Prime Minister urged Malaysians to evaluate Barisan by considering whether its past promises had been fulfilled, and whether new pledges would bring more benefits to the people.

The Opposition meanwhile should be evaluated on whether the promises that they were now making were believable and achievable.

If not, then it should be better not to support them, Najib said.

Defending Barisan's track record, Najib noted that Malaysia was recognised by the World Economic Forum as being among the 20 most competitive countries in the world.

The Government had also raised the country's per capita Gross National Income from US\$6,700 (RM20,100) in 2009 to US\$9,700, (RM29,100) in 2011, he said.

On the other hand, the Opposition's populist pledges, which included abolishing tolls and public academic institution students loans, would increase the country's deficit to almost 30% in the first year of implementation alone, Najib added.

He said that while the Opposition included the abolition of the Internal Security Act in its Buku Jingga manifesto, Barisan not only did away with the ISA but also went on to scrap related laws such as the Restricted Residence and Banishment Act.

Najib criticised Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim whom he described as an inconsistent political chameleon who tailored his message according to his audience.

Referring to the special prayers PAS performed for the destruction of Umno, Najib said: "At a time when our fellow Muslims in Gaza were facing disaster and in need of solidarity, some here were busy calling for the downfall of fellow Muslims."

Najib said that it was PAS that had caused a rift among Muslims after current party president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang issued an "edict" in 1981 which declared Umno an infidel organisation.

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