

PAS Agitated By BN's Promise For Seven Big Projects In Kelantan
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KOTA BAHARU, Feb 5 (Bernama) -- The seven big projects announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak during his visit to Kelantan recently to develop the state have become a hot topic among among the people in the state.

The opposition, especially PAS, tried to tell the people in Kelantan during their ceramah that the promises made by Barisan Nasional (BN) were merely lip service to garner votes for the coming general election.

However, many quarters regard PAS as being left agitated following the announcement because the projects were much needed infrastructure that PAS had failed to provide despite their 22 years of rule in Kelantan.

The seven projects are the construction of the Kuala Krai-Kota Baharu highway, a new stadium, the largest mosque to become an icon for Kelantan, people's housing which will begin with the construction of 3,000 units, the Rapid Kota Baharu transportation system, Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) town campus which can accommodate 5,000 students and a clean water supply project.

The announcement became a popular topic at coffee shops and gatherings, with many people saying it will benefit them and they were confident that BN could pull off the promises.

Azlin Mohamad Yusof, 34, a restaurant owner in Pengkalan Chepa, said many projects carried out by the Federal government were beneficial to the people including traders, such as expansion of the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport in Pengkalan Chepa which has increased the number of patrons at his restaurant.

"The restaurant I run is near the airport and people who use the airport come by to eat here," she said.

She said the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan campus in Pengkalan Chepa also brought in business to her and other traders in the area when staff and students dine there.

A horse breeder, Che Azha Che Mamat, 45, from Kampung Teluk Kitang, Jalan Sabak, Pengkalan Chepa, is confident that the seven projects will become a reality and solve problems faced by Kelantan residents.

"Even in Pengkalan Chepa, a PAS' stronghold, where the Chempaka state assembly is represented by the Menteri Besar (Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat), the Federal government built big projects including the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan campus, and a wave barrier to protect the Sabak beach and its surrounding areas from being engulfed by the sea," he said.

He hoped the implementation of such projects will stimulate the tourism sector, including equestrian sports.

Kelantan Malay Contractors Association president Datuk Mohd Rosdi Abdul Aziz regarded the Prime Minister's announcement as a promise and not a political gimmick for the coming

election.

"Najib has been prime minister for four years, he's made good of all the promises and the seven big projects were clearly requirements that PAS couldn't fulfill even though they promised to build a highway, stadium, state mosque, solve the clean water supply issue and people's housing project," he said.

He said the construction of the second Sultan Yahya Petra bridge connecting Pasir Pekan in Tumpat and Kota Baharu was almost complete, which shows the Federal government was truly concerned about resolving the congestion faced by the people.

The bridge not only eased traffic congestion but also encouraged property development in Tumpat, which had been lagging behind compared to other towns, he added.

"The second Sultan Yahya Petra bridge gives added value to Tumpat, for example, a 5,500 sq ft land worth RM35,000 has now increased to between RM70,000 and RM80,000," said Mohd Rosdi who is also Konsortium Kontraktor Melayu (Kelantan) Sdn Bhd executive chairman.

He was sure that PAS leaders who made allegations against the BN projects will also use the second bridge as well as seven other big projects upon their completion.

Mohd Rosdi was also confident that the project will open up opportunities to contractors and local workers.

Kelantan Umno Liaison head Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed who stressed that Najib's announcement was proof that the Federal government did not neglect Kelantan, said the Kelantan Umno has taken action to make the seven projects a reality.

"Several promises made by the Prime Minister have been acted upon such as identifying the site to build 1,000 public housing involving 2.4 hectares of land. For UiTM, there is already 5.6 hectares and we are negotiating its price with the owner," he said.

Mustapa, who is also International Trade and Industry Minister, slammed allegations by the opposition that the prime minister made the promises to fish for votes for the coming election, saying the BN government was continuously planning development projects even in PAS-led states.

"They (PAS) will deny everything that we do. Were not the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and second Sultan Yahya Petra bridge promises? We fulfilled them all," said Mustapa.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, during a visit to Kelantan recently, said it was time for the people of Kelantan to give BN a chance to govern the state and make way for changes in Kelantan.

He said the BN government was capable of changes that will bring the people of Kelantan out of a dull state as a result of PAS' failure to solve the people's problem in 22 years of rule.

"To get out of this depression, it is best to give an opportunity to Barisan Nasional (in the 13th general election). If after five years BN doesn't deliver, go back to the old government as it is the people who have the power. Give the Prime Minister this new mandate, look at his ways, will there be changes in five years. We want to help the people, but the people

have to believe in us," said Muhyiddin.

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