

**Vote for a 'young' BN, says Muhyiddin
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By Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 5 — Barisan Nasional (BN) is still a “young” party that knows the needs of all races despite having ruled for 55 years, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as he urged voters to stick with the ruling coalition to allow continuous reform.

The BN deputy chairman told voters not to be deceived by what he said was the opposition’s campaign to portray the ruling bloc as “old” and conservative, arguing that its experience has made it a party closest to the people’s hearts.

“Although the opposition tries to labels us as old, the people know even if we have ruled for 55 years this party is still young, the leadership comes and goes.

“We understand what the Malays, Chinese, Indians, Iban and Kadazan people want. We understand them better,” Muhyiddin told BN supporters after attending Friday prayers at a mosque in Wangsa Maju here.

In a vigorous campaign to court the young, a key demographic for Election 2013, the federal opposition pact Pakatan Rakyat (PR) told voters that Malaysia’s progress is hindered by “an old regime” with conservative policies it blamed for the much of country’s problems. PR leaders pledged it would put in place progressive ideas to steer Malaysia forward with a young leadership as its engine if it was voted into power.

BN, however, dismissed the pledge as a lie, pointing out that PR’s present leadership are made of “dinosaurs” like DAP stalwart Lim Kit Siang and PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang and led by former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who has been in politics since the 70s.

“Do not believe the lies of the opposition. We know them all to well,” Muhyiddin said today.

In a testimony of PR’s rising popularity, BN leaders took painstaking efforts to tell voters not to gamble the country’s future by making “emotional” decisions at the ballot, arguing that change is not always for the better.

Muhyiddin echoed the same warning, saying the Najib administration has played a key role in driving Malaysia forward under his flagship transformation plan.

Just days before Najib dissolved parliament, the prime minister trumpeted his government’s achievements for the past three years on live television including boasting of an increased in the country’s income per capita.

The BN chairman had also promised an annual Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) cash handouts scheme, a programme that boosted his approval rating up to 69 per cent, largely due to a surge among lower-income households.

The prime minister, however, warned that all this could be undone if Malaysians re-elect a weak BN, a view echoed by his deputy today.

"This is why our prime minister had asked for a stronger mandate so he can continue to lead with his transformation programme.

"He is a leader with a big vision so this is a critical time for us so I urge you to back us so we can finish our job," he said.

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