

Najib reminds Sikhs of BN contribution ahead of GE13
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PETALING JAYA, April 14 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak today reminded the Sikhs of Barisan Nasional's (BN) contribution to the community including steady cash allocations and urged them to back the coalition at the May 5 polls.

Amid the Vaisakhi celebrations here, Najib cited Putrajaya's cash distribution to NGOs representing the community as proof of his government's appreciation of the demographic, which accounts for less than five per cent of the voter population.

"Today, when I visit you here, I show to you I walk the talk. I am a prime minister for all Malaysians," he told the crowd gathered at the local gurdawara here.

"This shows we practice an inclusive policy which underpins the principle of 1 Malaysia. It is not only for the majority, it means the smallest community like the Sikhs will enjoy its benefits," he added.

From 2008 to date, Najib said the BN government had given RM21 million to organisations representing the Sikhs.

His government had also helped build more gurdawara and Punjabi language learning centres while several Sikhs now hold top government posts.

Najib said all this showed BN's sincere effort in protecting the minority community while at the same time, the coalition also recognises the Sikhs contribution to the country.

He added that the good relation between the two should be maintained and that BN would do more for the Sikhs if it is re-elected with a stronger mandate.

"If we can cross that bridge on May 5, we can deliver more."

Since taking office in 2009, Najib had embarked on an energetic mission to regain minority support by incorporating his all-inclusive 1 Malaysia concept into government policies.

In the historic 2008 elections, fleeing non-Muslim support led to BN losing its customary parliamentary supermajority and five states.

The dismal performance forced Najib's predecessor, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, out of office and the former has since inherited the uphill task to redeem BN's record losses.

Official campaigning period begins April 20 and polling will fall on May 5.

Election 2013 has been touted as Malaysia's tightest polls race to date with pundits saying a BN defeat would be possible. The coalition has ruled Malaysia since its independence in 1957.

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