

**Big Mandate Crucial For BN To Develop Nation - Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 3 (Bernama) -- A big mandate from the people to Barisan Nasional (BN) at the 13th general election is important for the government to realise the vision to turn Malaysia into a developed nation in the next seven years.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak Friday night said the mandate must be given based on BN's own merit in its effort to develop the nation.

"Not only do we need a strong mandate from the people, but I want to stress that, based on merit, we not only have a vision, we also have a clear road map and direction, and we have proven in the last four years, that we can implement the national transformation agenda.

"If the people see the success in the last four years, try to imagine if we get a strong mandate from them. What can we do in the next five years? Surely with a strong mandate, God willing, we can achieve more wonderful things," he said.

He said this during an interview by Media Prima News and Editorial Operation executive director Datuk Ahmad A. Talib in the one-hour programme 'Mandat 2013' broadcast by TV3.

Najib said BN had a good chance to achieve a two-third majority win in the 13th general election.

He said the confidence was based on the response which he received when he went down to the ground during the campaign period, which was not only heartening but also extraordinary in some places, showing the people's confidence in BN leaders.

"Taking into account the reception given to me, the Deputy Prime Minister and my other colleagues, I find that our aspiration to get the two-third majority, God willing, shows signs it is achievable.

"In the meantime, I do not want us to be too complacent, we have two more days, so we must carry out what have been directed by the party.

"The polling we have carried out and also by independent bodies including universities apparently indicate victory to BN," he said.

Najib also said there were signs that the people were returning to BN, especially in states administered by the opposition, following the increase in their response toward BN and the overall improved living conditions compared to previously.

"Sometimes when I ask in my speech, such as in Kelantan yesterday, the response from the public was so spontaneous when they said the present condition is better than 2008, in fact, in some places they said it is better than 2004.

"I also realise that the mood and sentiments are good, but there are still factors which must be taken into account to ensure everything goes as planned," he said.

Asked on the factor which caused the people to return to BN, he said the boost in

confidence was due to the national transformation agenda anchored to the 1Malaysia Concept implemented by the government in the past four years.

"We also carry out reforms in our country such as the Government Transformation Programme and the Economic Transformation Programme, we give room for a healthier democratic process in the country and uphold the rule of law.

"(Furthermore) our performance, our encouraging economy, we can provide employment opportunities, they see investment continues to go up, the value of our shares on the KLSE achieved the highest level in history, in excess of 1,700 (points) currently," he said.

Najib said all signs showed the confidence of the people especially with 'People First', it was not a slogan but the government could interpret it in the forms of programmes such as in the 2012 and 2013 Budgets, and the most impactful was the 1Malaysia People's Aid Programme.

He said the rousing response in Kelantan was based on two factors, namely, the confidence of the people in the national transformation policy and his undertaking, which was a BN contract with the people, that trustworthiness existed, when tabling the BN manifesto early last month.

"So, when I say this is a promise, a bond with the people, then the people believe today what we promise them will be executed in the next five years. God willing, this is much anticipated by people," he said.

Najib said the second factor was that the people of Kelantan had started to feel the time had come for them to invoke a change after 23 years of PAS' rule which had enabled them to evaluate how far the state government could meet its promises and its capability to administer Kelantan.

"What they had done in the Kelantan and national contexts created much doubts including questioning the PAS's commitment towards the Islamic faith itself and in upholding Islam.

He said, religious school teachers (guru pondok) had also lost faith in PAS on many matters related to faith especially the issue on the usage of the word 'Allah' in which PAS was seen flip-flopping and not defending the issue, which was a major one, involving not only Muslims in Kelantan, but also the whole country.

"In fact, yesterday I talked to a religious teacher. He told me, PAS could question other vices but PAS committed a major contravention of the faith when it says, PAS is Islam and Islam is PAS.

"Meaning, to the religious teachers, PAS had tarnished the faith of Muslims, this, to them is serious," he said, adding this was the major reason why their traditional supporters were losing faith in PAS.

Touching on the situation in Kedah, Najib regarded the state government as dysfunctional when the leadership of the Menteri Besar and several of its excos were at loggerheads indicating the state was lame and could not meet the aspiration of the people.

"Because of this, I am confident in Kedah, too, the people are ready to return Kedah to BN," he said.

In Selangor, Najib said the people in the state were disappointed, especially single mothers who clearly felt cheated when promises made in 2008 which were not met by the state government under Parti Keadilan Rakyat.

"They also realise Selangor is crucial for the future of the nation. If we mention the national transformation agenda, 60 percent of the Gross Domestic Product is focused in the Klang Valley. The national development and the achievement of the national transformation policy will be stunted if we do not ensure the government of Selangor and the federation are from the same party.

"On matters of water alone, look at how our plan for an effective and long term solution to water shortage is thwarted by the state government," he said.

Commenting on Sabah and Sarawak, Najib said both the states remained BN strongholds although they were repeatedly stormed by the opposition pact.

"As in the general election in Sarawak, despite the intense onslaught by the opposition, we won by more than two-thirds. So I see Sabah and Sarawak will maintain the status quo," he said.

Other than encouraging the people to come out and vote on Sunday, he also urged voters to be calm and evaluate wisely before picking those leaders who could assure a brighter future for them.

"Please come out and vote, don't be afraid, this is merely a political game. This is about the psychology of fear, we bow to it, its means the quarters responsible will succeed.

"(On security) it is the guarantee of the police and security forces. First and foremost, we believe if the people act in accordance with the law of the nation, God willing, GE13 will proceed peacefully," he added.

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