

Umno must woo 'urban villagers' to stay in power, says Najib
Malaysian Insider
May 11, 2014
By Lee Shi-Ian

As Umno celebrated its original founding anniversary today, its members were reminded that, for it to survive, it must pay attention to the urban and semi-urban areas.

Party president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said rural support should be maintained, but the party had to work to win over "urban villagers", or those who worked in the city but returned to their villages to vote.

"These are groups which Umno must pay attention to. We cannot be seen only as a party for rural people," Najib told Umno members at the party's 68th anniversary celebration at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur tonight.

"In order to stay in power, we look not only to our strengths, but also areas where we can make improvements."

Najib identified "urban villagers" as the key to attracting more support for Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN).

He said rural support remained the core of the party, but with migration and demography changes, Umno should read and understand these changes.

"This is to continue to gain support from the people no matter where they are.

"These changes must be carefully evaluated by Umno. The party must do adjustments to its long-held policies and take a new approach and action in stages at the division and branch levels.

"It is to get to know the heart and soul and support of our rural communities while at the same time not be rejected by the urban community," Najib said.

In the 13th general election last year, BN formed the government after winning by a simple majority, although it lost the popular vote.

Najib pointed out that Malaysia was among the biggest social media users with 14 million Malaysians holding Facebook accounts.

"A key factor will be who is successful in influencing social media users and gaining their support," he said.

Najib added that having an army of bloggers was immaterial as quality trumped quantity.

"It is better to have a few bloggers who are followed by a big number of users rather than having a lot of bloggers," he said, adding that their influence was the key to their effectiveness.

Najib told party leaders and members to ask themselves if Umno was the party of choice for Generation-Y voters.

Researchers and commentators use birth years ranging from the early 1980s to the early 2000s to describe Generation-Y. – May 11, 2013.

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/umno-must-woo-urban-villagers-to-stay-in-power-says-najib>