

Don't be fooled by 'Sabah for Sabahans' slogan, says Najib
Free Malaysia Today
May 7, 2017

Stressing that his government is building the Pan Borneo Highway, he points to an earlier prime minister who ruled for 22 years but never built the highway for Sabah.

SANDAKAN: Najib Razak has called on the people of Sabah not to be influenced by the slogan 'Sabah for Sabahans', assuring that as the nation's Prime Minister he will do his utmost to meet the needs of the state.

He said Sabah received the highest development allocation among all states from the federal government for the first two years of the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020).

The RM9 billion allocated amounts to 10.3% of the federal government's overall budget, he added.

"We also did something that went beyond the expectations of the people," he said.

He pointed to the 1,089-km long Pan Borneo Highway in Sarawak, and the 706-km Pan Borneo Highway in Sabah which are expected to be completed by late 2021.

"The Sabah people have waited too long for this. Twenty five years have been spent waiting for the Pan Borneo Highway," he said.

"There was one person who was prime minister for 22 years but he never built the highway for Sabah," he said, referring to Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) chairman Dr Mahathir Mohamad who led the country from 1981 to 2003.

"I have not even been in office that long and may not govern for 22 years, but I am building the Pan Borneo Highway," he said.

He added that the highway would be toll-free as a "gift" to Sabah.

Najib said the government has allocated RM12.8 billion for the construction of Pan Borneo Highway in Sabah which stretches from Sindumin in the Sipitang district in western Sabah to Tawau in the east.

He added that the overall highway project would cover a cost of RM20 billion.

The 'Sabah for Sabahans' slogan has been reported to have been used recently following a change in the political landscape that saw former UMNO vice-president and minister Shafie Apdal leaving the party to form Parti Warisan Sabah.

Najib was speaking when launching the 'Ekspresi Negaraku' programme in Sandakan.

Also present were Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman and Communications and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak.

Najib warned of "enemies" (musuh dalam selimut) among Malaysians, pointing to the armed incursion by Sulu militiamen in eastern Sabah in 2013.

He lauded the sacrifice of Special Branch officer Supt Ibrahim Lebar who hailed from the peninsula and was among government officers killed by intruders in Semporna on March 2 that year, following a leak in security operations from within the police to the enemy.

"I want to say that if we are united and love our nation, no external enemy can disrespect and threaten Sabah," he said.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/05/07/dont-be-fooled-by-sabah-for-sabahans-slogan-says-najib/>