

Changes bearing fruit

ATTAINING VISION 2020:

Malaysians will reap benefits of living in a developed nation

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P RIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak last night spoke of the encouraging results of the various transformation programmes and asked Malaysians to see them through to help the country attain Vision 2020.

In a televised speech marking his three years in office, the prime minister said the government could deliver on its promises and was responsible and trustworthy.

With just eight years to go, he said, the country needed a competent "driver" to guide the nation safely towards achieving its 2020 target.

"So let us not experiment by changing midway the driver who has been proven with a reckless and doubtful driver," he said in the speech telecast live on prime-time television to launch the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) annual reports for 2011.

"Be careful of storytellers. They are only good at promising but never in keeping them."

TEXT OF PM'S SPEECH: P14, 15 & 20
MORE REPORTS: P2, 3, B6 & B7

Najib reminded Malaysians that the future of their children depended on decisions they made now.

He said his administration's 1Malaysia People First, Performance Now policy, which comes under GTP, had begun to correct imbalances in society to ensure all reaped the benefits of living in a developed nation.

Najib spoke of his first speech as prime minister three years ago where he outlined the 1Malaysia policy to bring Malaysia forward.

→ Turn to Page 2



Datuk Seri Najib Razak speaking on the success of the Government Transformation Programme and Economic Transformation Programme on TV yesterday. Pic by Sairien Nafis

Najib: Record 1,000km of rural roads built

→ From Page 1

He said that the policies were essentially to celebrate and capitalise on Malaysia's diverse population and culture through the 1Malaysia agenda.

Presenting the GTP report card yesterday, Najib said the programmes would make Malaysia a developed and high-income nation by 2020.

He provided clear results of its success thus far and how Malaysians had benefited from the measures.

Najib said his administration, which was close to facing the people in the 13th general election, would remain honest about the challenges in store and steps to overcome them.

The challenges when he became prime minister, related directly to the era of globalisation and a borderless world.

"First is to strengthen unity among the various races. Second is to form a government delivery system that will meet the people's aspirations and third is to get Malaysia out of the middle-income nation trap where growth becomes slower and development becomes static."

Najib said the government broke the overall challenges into seven manageable parts, with each National Key Result Areas (NKRA) aimed at improving the overall quality of life among Malaysians.

At the top of the list was helping Malaysians manage the higher cost of living.

Efforts included monetary assistance for the lower-to-middle-income group and all students, a salary increase for civil servants and a five-year break in toll increases on the highly used North-South Expressway as well as abolishing tolls on at least two other urban high-

ways.

The government also went all out to make Malaysia a safe place to live in, by deploying more police personnel, especially in "hot" areas.

The government also made education for both primary and secondary education free.

"The government realises that our children are our nation's jewels."

Rural folks have not been forgotten, as within the last two years, almost 1,000km of rural roads have been built, a record in this time frame in the country's history.

Public transport was another important element with its own NKRA where several big public transport projects had been undertaken.

The first phase of the mammoth Kuala Lumpur Mass Rapid Transit project would be completed in five years. In addition, more coaches would be added to both the Kuala Lumpur Light Rail Transit as well as

KTM Komuter networks.

The government has also introduced the Expressway Transit Bus service, benefiting some 370,000 commuters daily with faster travel time.

The GTP also went all out to eradicate poverty. "We have managed to wipe out acute poverty where we managed to get about 44,000 households out of the category. However, we remain vigilant against new possible cases."

Other important measures include those undertaken through the government's *akhiri zaman miskin* or end the poverty era initiative.

The IAZAM initiative has provided benefits for 47,000 households in the lower-income category. This involved a sum of RM500 million.

Another programme specifically for the poor is the *Kebajikan Rakyat 1Malaysia*, involving a sum of RM1.4 billion a year allocated for about

500,000 recipients.

To plug leaks in the system, Najib's administration has adopted zero tolerance towards corruption.

"Corruption is like cancer in society."

Meanwhile, backing up the GTP were the ETP and New Economic Model (NEM) launched in 2010.

The ETP and NEM's primary objectives are to get Malaysia out of the middle-income nation trap and put the nation on a correct path towards achieving Vision 2020, that of a developed and high-income nation.

Per capita income has risen to US\$9,700 (RM29,650) now from US\$6,700 when the ETP was launched two years ago.

Najib said according to 2011 data, both the RM852.7 billion gross domestic product and RM830.7 billion gross national income achieved that year were the highest ever in history.