

# Najib: Respect institution of Prime Minister

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The institution of the Prime Minister should be respected by all and put on the highest pedestal to avoid political instability.

Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said if the institution of the Prime Minister was not protected and allowed to be disturbed, it would only bring about chaos and instability.

"No one has doubted the leadership helmed by our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. We should not question his position but respect him as the foremost leader in the country," he said.

Najib was commenting on Dr Mahathir's remark in New York yesterday, which quoted him as saying that he would go on serving as

long as the people needed him.

Dr Mahathir had added that he did not know if he would be Prime Minister for as long as Deng Xiaoping had been the leader of China but he said: "For as long as I'm still needed by the people, I'll have to do my bit."

The Prime Minister made the remark in an interview with CNN, the international

television news network, at his St Regis Hotel suite in New York. Najib added that one of the factors that made a country stronger was the fact that no one challenged the Prime Minister.

"If there are changes to be made, a smooth transition of power should be done. Should Dr Mahathir feel that it is time for him to retire, then he will surely

ensure a transition of power to his successor in a proper manner," Najib said, responding to questions from newsmen after opening the Malaysian Historical Society's 40th annual general meeting here today.

"To me, the posts of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister are the two which should not be disturbed or challenged."