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Scrutinise foreign ideas first, Malaysians advised

MALAYSIANS should scrutinise foreign ideas before accepting them as some may bring about negative implications, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said yesterday.

While arguing that reformation and new ideas should not be rejected outright, he said Malaysians should not get carried away and accept them in toto.

Commenting on the presidential address by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the opening of the Umno General Assembly yesterday, Najib said the concept of democracy in Malaysia, for instance, had been tailored and re-adjusted to suit the country.

On cronyism, he said the Prime Minister touched on the topic so as to define its meaning.

He said a person whose ability had not been tested, but was head of a corporation "need not necessarily be a crony."

This, he said, was because "someone needs to be appointed to head a corporation."

On the New Economic Policy, Najib said no one was in a position to deny that they had benefited from it.

Najib also commented on the party leadership, saying that Umno had the absolute right to determine who its leaders should be.

"If the external forces try to push our hand in making us remove our leaders, we should stand together with full confidence and repudiate their efforts to bring us down."

Another vice-president, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, urged members not to echo the West and resort to actions which may jeopardise the party and the nation.

He invited members to analyse Dr Mahathir's speech which he said was full of advice on how to ensure that Umno would continue to survive.

"We should not do anything for short-term gains and sacrifice long-term aspirations," he said when asked on allegations of nepotism and cronyism as put forward by Umno Youth leader Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

Abdullah said Umno should be wary of ideas from those who were not in favour of the party and the Government.

"If we blindly accept these ideas, we may fall into a trap and suffer serious consequences," he said.

He added that Dr Mahathir did not totally reject the idea of globalisation, liberalisation and deregulation which were being championed by the West.

"All he suggested was that these ideas should be studied carefully before being adopted," he said.

Abdullah added that the Barisan Nasional coalition Government had remained in power because the people were in favour of its system of governance and supported the leadership.

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