

12 DEC 1998
Najib-Youth
UMNO YOUTH CAN CRITICIZE LEADERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth should not blindly support but could instead criticize the party's leadership, Umno Vice President Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said the Youth movement was free to criticize as long as it was according to party channels as the leadership is an institution that must be respected.

The Youth movement should also defend the leadership in any situation, he said in addressing a forum on Umno Youth in the New Millennium at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

"Umno Youth should never ever go against the party leadership and should look to Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as a father," he said.

"This does not mean Umno Youth should give support blindly but the fact is that the party leadership is an institution that must be respected."

Najib, who is also Education Minister, called on Umno Youth to defend the party leadership and when it puts forward the wishes of the grassroots, it is to strengthen and not weaken the party leadership.

He said Umno Youth should continue to drive for reforms as Umno is the party that brings the most effective reforms for the country.

"The word reform should not be made the property of others as it would then picture Umno, especially Umno Youth, as not making the appropriate and necessary changes although Umno has long promoted reforms," he said.

He reminded Umno Youth that the changes pursued must be within the system practiced which respects the law and party constitution.

Najib also called on the Umno Youth movement to improve their knowledge in science and information technology in order to ensure the target of being a fully developed nation by 2020 is achieved.

Earlier, Acting Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said the Youth movement should be thankful to be born a generation of the New Economic Policy, the result of Umno's struggles.

He said the Youth movement should thus be ready to defend the country in meeting current challenges.

-- BERNAMA
MNY THG