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Umno to debate three motions

PEKAN: Three motions will be debated at the Umno general assembly from June 20-22, its vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said yesterday.

He said the motions were on the presidential address, education, religion and social issues.

"We believe the Umno president (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) will touch on several important matters in his keynote address," he said after opening the general meeting of the Nenasi Fishermen Association.

Issues like command of English, Malaysia as an Islamic country and meritocracy were expected to be raised by delegates during the debate, said Najib, who heads the committee on motions.

He said the assembly would provide a platform for members to strengthen party unity at all levels.

"We will renew our determination to strengthen the party. We have been on the right track of political resurgence since the last general election, as evident from our victories in several by-elections, the last being Ketari," he said.

Asked on the meeting to be held between Mahathir and Pope John Paul II in Vatican City next month, Najib said it was a good opportunity for the prime minister to give a correct picture of Islam at a time when Muslims were frequently linked to terrorism.

"We view the prime minister's move to meet the Pope as appropriate. The willingness of a Muslim leader to meet with the head of the Roman Catholic Church shows Islam is not against inter-faith dialogues. "It will give Islam a good image," he said.

Mahathir said he has agreed to the pope's invitation to visit the Vatican and that it would be endorsed by the cabinet. - Bernama