

07 OCT 2002

DEMOCRACY ALLOWS SMOOTH SUCCESSION IN LEADERSHIP, SAYS NAJIB

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 7 (Bernama) -- Democracy allows for an orderly leadership succession as it gives the people the power to choose and change their leaders, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

"In a democracy, the people have the power to elect and change their leaders. This is, after all, the essence of democracy," he said.

For those in line, true to Asian tradition, Najib said: "They must remain patient, remain loyal to the leadership, continue to pay deference to the leader and the political elders, to manage one's ambitions, and most of all, to exercise humility".

Speaking on "Leadership and Succession" at the World Economic Forum's East Asian Summit here, he said in order to instil public and investors' confidence, successors should demonstrate a strong sense of stability, continuity, reliance and consistency in policy.

Malaysia, he said had had a good record of political succession. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad took over from Tun Hussein Onn in the calmest environment and in the near future, he would be succeeded in the same manner by his named successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, he said.

"This has been the hallmark of Malaysia's stability," added Najib.

-- BERNAMA

MAD WNZ AHH AO