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Najib-PAS

NO ULTERIOR MOTIVE BEHIND INVITE TO FADZIL

KUANTAN, May 26 (Bernama) -- Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Umno did not have any ulterior motive when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor were invited to address a forum on the Palestinian issue recently.

"The question of performance, that is up to anybody (to interpret). We cannot help it if the Umno president (Dr Mahathir) received accolades for his speech as the (speech) contents gained public attention".

Najib told reporters this after opening the Kuantan Umno division delegates conference here today.

He was asked to comment on a column in the latest edition of Harakah, PAS' official bulletin, which claimed that the forum was Umno's ploy for the party to gain political mileage.

The writer of the column, who used the pseudonym "PPK" also criticized Fadzil for his willingness to share the stage with Dr Mahathir.

Najib, who is the Umno vice-president, said the invitation for Dr Mahathir and Fadzil to speak at the forum held at the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) was fair to both leaders.

He said both leaders had the opportunity to deliver their speech which was telecasted live.

"If PAS did not receive praises, then we should not be accused of exploiting the function for our political interest," he said.

Najib also said, based on analysis held at the state, division and grassroot level, the Pahang Umno was on the right track to face the coming general election.

He said many of the Malays had returned to supporting Umno.

"I am confident that the Pahang Umno is now on the right track to gain excellence and more strength and in the next general election we will show that our performance would be better," he said.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob was also present.

-- BERNAMA

MS MAI ZUL