

21/04/2003

There is hope for continued Umno-Pas unity, says Najib

PARIT, Sun. - There is hope for continued Umno-Pas unity, especially over issues concerning Islam and Muslims on all fronts, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

He said fundamental political differences aside, there had been an increased level of co-operation and he expressed hope this would be continued.

"Umno hopes this can continue because we have observed that lately there has been a lessening of conflicts between the two parties," he said after opening the Parit Umno delegates meeting at Lambor Kanan near here.

Najib also thanked Pas acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang for praising Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his foreign policies.

Hadi, in an interview with the New Sunday Times and Berita Minggu today, said he admired Dr Mahathir's resolve for refusing aid from the International Monetary Fund in the 1997-98 financial crisis.

"This means Pas has acknowledged the strength of Dr Mahathir's leadership in preventing the IMF from dictating terms to the country," Najib said, adding that the Government's efforts in guarding the country's interest and dignity had begun to attract the attention of Pas leaders.

Najib, who is Defence Minister, said Pas' support of Umno's stance on Iraq reflected the two parties' common and shared principles. He also praised Hadi for declaring he would defend Dr Mahathir's leadership if any foreign powers were to exert their influence on the latter to resign.