

Najib urges Umno to stop squabbling ahead of GE
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Umno president Najib Abdul Razak has told party members to close ranks and to stop squabbling among themselves.

Dropping yet another hint that the next general election is near, the prime minister said that the party members should stop with the factionalism within the party.

"Although we have started a political transformation process (some time) ago, we must step it up even more. It's not hard, a big secret nor is it rocket science. It's simple actually.

"Why? When we look back at the origins and history of Umno, the party was formed in Istana Johor. Think back of the party veterans' struggles - their secret was simply *bersatu, bersetia and berkhidmat* (Umno's tagline of 'unity, loyalty and servitude').

"If Umno is united, what more if we were to hold on to the belief that Umno is the sole party for Malays, when people used to say that 'Malay is Umno and Umno is Malay'.

"If we are united in Umno, and there is no more factionalism, we can be an even stronger party today... There is still squabbling and factionalism among us.

"So what's the point of celebrating the party's 65th anniversary if we don't unite and discard this (factionalism)?" he told the 1,500 Umno members and BN representatives at the party's 65th anniversary dinner in Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur today.

The premier also told Umno members not to resort to being *merajuk* (sulking) if they are not selected as candidates in any elections.

"If you don't become a candidate, will you still be loyal to Umno?" he asked, to which the audience responded with a resounding "Yes!"

"Are you sure? Even if you don't have the mandate from the party leadership?"

"OK, I will test you all one day. Let there be no one who sulks, or refuse to work, or goes overseas during election time just because they are not selected as candidates," Najib said.

'Brand value'

Urging Umno members to carry on the 65 years' tradition of diligence and servitude, Najib told the party folk to work harder and seize the momentum of an increasing support for the party.

umno 65th anniversary 110511 leaders and confetti
Saying that the party's fortunes are turning around from the 'nightmare' of the 12th general elections in 2008 which saw BN losing its two-thirds' parliamentary majority for the first time since 1969, Najib said support for the party is back on the upward trend.

Even the past few by-elections have seen a resounding win for the Umno candidates, and in the case of Kerdu by-election, the party did even better than the 2004 general election, said the prime minister.

"We helped our friends in BN Sarawak to win their state election.

"But does that mean we should be comfortable? I say that as long as the siren for the 13th general election is not sounded yet, we must work even harder and more diligently," said Najib.

In his speech, he also urged the party members to keep Umno relevant and in power.

"We have the strength, our brand name still holds high value with Malaysians. If we work hard, are in tune with the people and are loyal to the party, then we can continue celebrating the anniversary of Umno which will continue to be in power on this earth," he said.

In the function, Umno also awarded the 'Tokoh Melayu Terbilang' (distinguished Malay figure) to United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs director Mazlan Othman and Muslim thinker Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas.

Despite the pomp and splendour of the function in PWTC, anti-PKR literature have also made its rounds among the delegates.

In the goodie bags given to the members, there was a book entitled "God, Politics and Sex" written by Syed Hussein Al Attas, a frequent pro-Umno author.

The book detailed allegations of PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's alleged sexual misconduct, and insinuations about the opposition leader's sexual orientation.

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