

Najib: Chief sec proof Indian-Muslims not left behind
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today moved to soothe complaints that the Indian Muslim community was being marginalised, pointing out that leaders from the community have made it to top government posts.

"If there are complaints that there are not enough people (Indian Muslim representation) - I don't want to say this out loud - but who is the chief secretary to the government (Ali Hamsa)?" he said.

Speaking at the opening of the 36th Malaysian Indian Muslim Congress (Kimma) representative conference this morning, Najib was responding to Kimma president Syed Ibrahim Kader's speech earlier in which he had said that the community had fallen behind.

"He (Ali) is loyal to us. He is a good man. Malays boleh (can), Kimma boleh, all boleh. So there is not much distinction between us, there is no wall separating us.

"We are in the same boat. There is no problem. The only difference is the upper deck or lower deck, everything else is the same," he said, promising to improve the socio-economic situation of the Indian Muslims.

Earlier, Syed Ibrahim (left) had also complained that Kimma - a registered political party since 1976, becoming an associate member of Umno in 2010- had not received cooperation at the state and divisional levels from the latter.

"Some aren't even aware of this and others question the associate membership cynically," he said.

He also put forth an 18-point motion which contained a slew of requests for the premier, including a deputy minister position for the party.

Among other requests include varsity quotas for Indian Muslims, creation of "Indian Muslim" category for birth certificates and Kimma representation at all local councils and every state Islamic religious council.

'Indian Muslims part of Umno'

Najib promised that he would look into the problems of the Indian Muslim community and urged cooperation from Umno but noted the extraordinarily long list of requests.

"This is perhaps the longest list of motions I have ever seen in any conference. Even though the Indian Muslim community is not big, but their motions are long, even Umno's motions lose out to them," he quipped.

He said that Umno itself had a sizeable Indian Muslim membership, particularly in Penang, making up half of its membership.

"Never in the history of Umno have I seen its minutes written in Tamil," Najib said in amusement.

He added that due to Kimma's unwavering support for the BN, he had never hesitated in granting funds it requested and urged them to help secure a strong majority for the ruling coalition.

"Kimma has proven, without doubt, that it is a close and loyal partner of BN. Every time there is a general election or by-election, Kimma has stepped up to give us undivided support and no doubt they will do so in the coming general election that may be called at any time.

"Gather the strength of the Indian Muslim community and work hard to ensue a big mandate for BN.

"If Kimma gives undivided support to BN and Umno, then it is appropriate for Umno and BN to support Kimma and consider what is due for the Indian Muslim community which has contributed much politically, economically, and socially," he said.

The conference was also attended by Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, MCA secretary-general Kong Cho Ha, MIC secretary-general S Murugesan and PPP president M Kayveas.

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