

Najib: Pak Lah is right, it's difficult to reform Umno

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By Lee Long Hui

Prime Minister and Umno president Najib Abdul Razak concurs with his predecessor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi that the Umno's inertia on reform is one of his biggest challenges.

Responding to Abdullah's comments in a newly-released book titled 'Awakening: The Abdullah Badawi Years in Malaysia', Najib said changing the people's mind was a "gargantuan task" that could take a few generations.

najib hari raya open house pc 080813 08"I agree with that because Umno has to change. We had started the process by changing the (party) constitution. But as you know, changing the people's mind is another gargantuan task, which may take more than just the time that I am the president of Umno.

"It might even require a few generations to change," Najib said at a press conference today on the sidelines of his Aidilfitri open house at his official residence in Putrajaya.

Najib was asked if he agreed with Abdullah, who told the book's editors that Umno is at a crossroads, that it was difficult to reform the party and that would be Najib's biggest challenge.

Change - the only constant

Najib said Umno must change with time in order to reflect the change of attitude, values and expectations of society.

"But I believe Umno has got the message, but like any political party, it will take time to change," he said.

When change is instituted every time, there are people who are in favour of it because they can see what is coming will benefit them, but there are also people who fear change because they are uncertain as to whether they would benefit.

"But the only thing constant in this world is 'change'. So if you don't change you will be left behind, you will be overtaken. Malaysia will be overtaken as a nation. I am sure we do not want that," Najib added.

He stressed that the government wanted to transform Malaysia to become a fully developed nation, which had started in the era of former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The transformation that I have started is a continuation of what was started in Mahathir's time, in order to achieve Vision 2020 which was articulated by Mahathir and supported by Pak Lah. Now, it is my time to deliver it.

"So that is how I see it. This is a continuation of three prime ministers working to accomplish our true ambition for Malaysia," he added.

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