

Najib basks in Obama's 'praise' at UN
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Prime Minister Najib Razak claims that Malaysia tops the list of countries praised by US President Barack Obama in a speech at the United Nations (UN).

A proud Najib told some 200 Malaysians how Malaysia was commended by Obama for developing entrepreneurship and heading towards an advanced economy.

Najib said this at a black-tie dinner attended mainly by Malaysian students in the US, held yesterday in Queens, New York.

“He singled out Malaysia in his speech. There were other (countries cited as) examples (in the speech) too but if you look at those examples, they were not as great as the example of Malaysia, because more or less, it recognised that we are heading towards an advanced economy,” he said.

Describing it as an “encouraging incident”, Najib's announcement was received with a round of applause from the floor.

Malaysia was one of the Muslim countries mentioned in Obama's address to the UN General Assembly on Wednesday on the development of civil society as an alternative to extremism.

In his speech, Obama (left) says, “And such positive change need not come at the expense of tradition and faith. We see this in Iraq, where a young man started a library for his peers.

“We see it in Tunisia, where secular and Islamist parties worked together through a political process to produce a new constitution.

“We see it in Senegal, where civil society thrives alongside a strong democratic government.

“We see it in Malaysia, where vibrant entrepreneurship is propelling a former colony into the ranks of advanced economies.

And we see it in Indonesia, where what began as a violent transition has evolved into a genuine democracy,” said Obama. His speech is published on the White House official website.

Hyping up Malaysia's standing

Najib and several members of his administration were on an eight-day visit to the US to

attend a few meetings, including the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly and the UN Climate Summit 2014.

The dinner was organised by the education ministry to award 31 outstanding Malaysian students studying in the US.

Najib also expressed hope that Malaysia's campaign for one of the five non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council would be successful.

“Hopefully we will succeed like how we won in the Pengkalan Kubor by-election,” he said.

Malaysia is contesting against Fiji for the two-year mandates allocated to Asia Pacific region. The election will be carried out on Oct 16.

Second Education Minister Idris Jusoh, Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Malaysian ambassador to the United States Awang Adek Hussin and his predecessor Jamaluddin Jarjis also attended the dinner.

During the three-course western meal, the leaders were hyping up Malaysia's standing in the international arena in their speeches.

Among others, Idris claimed that Najib received a louder applause than leaders from other countries when he addressed the UN General Assembly.

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