

## **Be fair to me, 'depressed' PM tells media**

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**By Zikri Kamarulzaman**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is depressed. This is because BN has lost votes due to what he described as inaccurate media reports.

He said the media prioritised speed over accuracy, and shaped a negative perception of the ruling government that was difficult to shake off.

"I am depressed, politicians are depressed because we are easy targets.

"The print media loses out on circulation and we lose out on votes. We can be depressed together," he said.

Speaking at a breaking of fast event with the media at Sinar Harian's headquarters in Shah Alam, the premier cited news reports about Tabung Haji's purchase of Tun Razak Exchange land on the last day of campaigning for the Permatang Pauh by-election as an example of how news affected votes.

"News was spread alleging we were using Tabung Haji funds to save 1MDB, even though it was a commercial transaction that would have made Tabung Haji at least RM170 million.

"Surely we would not use the people's money to bail out 1MDB - that's not what a responsible government does - but the story had gone viral.

"This is the challenge of the new news environment, where people chase news to publish as quickly as possible to make it viral and shape perception.

"The accuracy of the news is second to being the first with the news," he lamented.

BN lost the Permatang Pauh by-election to PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, with a 8,841-vote majority.

As such, the prime minister pleaded with the media to be fair with him and report based on the truth.

"We must seek the truth, that's all I ask, and be fair," he said.

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