

Najib: Three million Umno members support me
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said today he would not step down as the Umno president because three million party members were firmly behind him.

He said that as an individual elected through democratic principles based on the new party constitution, he should be given room to serve Umno and the people well.

"With the strong support of Umno, I will not bow to the demand of one person to step down because three million Umno members are with me. I am not arrogant but I was elected (as the Umno president), so do not stop me from doing my best (for the people).

"There is talk that I was not wise to have discarded the quota system for the presidential election, but I want our party to be more inclusive, more democratic. So, I left it to the Umno members to decide," Najib (photo) said when opening the Kota Melaka Umno division delegates meeting in Bandar Hilir, Malacca.

Malacca chief minister Idris Haron, who is Malacca Umno liaison committee chairman, Puteri Umno chief Mas Ermieyati Shamsudin and Kota Melaka Umno division chief Abdul Latiff Tamby Chik were also present at the event.

Najib called on Umno members to support him, not in his personal capacity but as the party president.

"The support for me is not because I am Najib, not in my personal capacity; strong support should be given to the Umno president because we cannot have a weak Umno president for we must ensure the success of our party," he said.

1MDB is not a defining issue

Najib said Umno members should discard extremism and opt for moderation to ensure that Umno continued to garner the support of the people.

He said arrogance and the thought that Umno was invincible in elections would make Umno members complacent and, seeing that the party was weak, would make Umno members give up the party's struggle and thus disappoint the people.

"If we opt for the middle path, if we choose moderation and are united, loyal to the leader, work hard, serve the people, solve the people's problems, look after the welfare of all communities, God willing we will win (the elections)," he said.

Najib said the people looked at their capability to put food on the table, and so this should be given primary focus by Umno members.

"The people want a roof over their heads, want to earn a decent living, want schools and education, which we must focus on. The 1MDB is not a defining issue," he said.

He said the spirit of camaraderie should be fostered in Umno at the grassroots and various levels to ensure that the party remained strong to champion the cause of the people and the Malays.

Umno was the backbone of the struggle to champion the plight of the Malays in the country, he said and advised party members against allowing differences of opinion to destroy the party.

"Without Umno, wretched will be the lives of the Malays. I cannot imagine the plight of the Malays without Umno," he said.

- Bernama

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