

No, I do not want only 'yes men', says Najib

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Alyaa Azhar

Umno president Najib Abdul Razak has denied that he only wanted 'yes men' pointing out that Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor was still the party's secretary-general although he disagreed with him at times.

"I am not a party president that wants all Umno leaders to be my 'yes men'.

"If the party consists of only 'yes men', then we would not have differing views," the prime minister said in his speech when officiating the Bandar Tun Razak Umno division meeting in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur today.

He then pointed out how Tengku Adnan, at times, would convey his disagreement on certain matters.

"I am not so autocratic. Ask Ku Nan (Tengku Adnan), sometimes he will say, 'Sorry sir, I don't agree with you'.

"But he is still the Umno secretary-general," said Najib.

Najib's remarks come just as his former deputy Muhyiddin Yassin today said that leaders who are blinded by 'yes men' will never step down.

It is highly likely that Muhyiddin had referred to Najib although he did not mention any names.

'Fight behind closed doors'

Meanwhile, Najib said although Umno members could give differing views, as the party's president he wants a disciplined party; one that holds on to principles.

"We can give our views, we can even quarrel in meetings, bang the table to stress our point, as long as you don't throw chairs around.

"When the party has made a decision, we must hold on to collective responsibility," he said.

Explaining that this is because it involved the party's dignity and image, Najib said party members could fight amongst one another, just like how a family does where a husband and wife may, at times, fight.

"But on the outside, we must show that we are united and happy. If you don't agree on something, we can discuss the matter again," he said.

Najib also pointed out how the way to weaken a party was through weakening its president.

"I am attacked not because I am Najib. If not, why wasn't I attacked more when I was the deputy

president?

"So to make Umno fall, is through its leaders. So stories that do not exist, are made up.

"This is the strategy of the opposition. Those in Umno should not take the opportunity (to attack)," he said.

Muhyiddin was dropped from his post as deputy prime minister primarily for criticising Najib on the controversy surrounding the debt-ridden 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

In announcing Muhyiddin's removal, Najib had explained that cabinet members should not air their differences in an open forum as it was contrary to the concept of collective responsibility.

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