

PM warns M'sian students in US of hearsay in blogs, news portals
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has urged Malaysian students in the United States not to trust blogs and news portals.

"Don't believe everything you read in blogs or news portals because quite a lot of it is hearsay and allegations that are not proven," he said at an event organised by the Malaysian Consulate in New York yesterday.

Malaysiakini has obtained a recording of Najib's speech at the event.

The prime minister has been courting bad press locally and abroad, especially on 1MDB and the RM2.6 billion political donation.

Ahead of his speech at the UN general assembly, Najib had been criticised by the Washington Post, Sydney Morning Herald and Canada's The Globe and Mail.

In an attempt to assuage the students that the country and government are doing well, Najib said Malaysia was on the right track to become a high income nation.

He cited Malaysia's ranking of 12th out of 60 countries in the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2014 as an example of this.

Brave enough to introduce GST

Najib also said he had a meeting with the Fitch Ratings agency, which said Malaysia was on the right track economically.

"Fitch said despite the economic headwinds and volatility in the global markets, they believe we are on the right track.

"They (Fitch) said you are brave enough to introduce the goods and services tax as a government. I said 'Yes brave enough but its costing us some brownie points'.

"But they said 'Never mind in the long term you will be proven right'," Najib said.

The premier added that Fitch also praised Putrajaya's move to replace blanket subsidies with targeted subsidies.

Najib's assurance comes as the ringgit tumbles against the US dollar. It is the worst the local currency has performed since the 1998 Asian financial crisis.

The prime minister has defended his administration from blame, saying that many currencies are performing poorly due to global market jitters.

However economic and political observers say the ringgit is performing worse because of economic and political instability in Malaysia due to Najib's various scandals, including 1MDB.

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