

Najib: I've done more for the Indian community than Dr M
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak simply could not help but to throw his nemesis and predecessor Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the shade.

In his speech at MIC's 70th anniversary dinner last night, Najib pointed out how he had contributed more for the Indian community compared to Mahathir.

Najib cited MIC president Dr S Subramaniam who had, earlier in his speech, said that Najib was the only prime minister who realised that more needed to be done to advance the country's Indian community.

"He (Subramaniam) could have said it in another way; that in the seven years I've been prime minister, I've done more than someone who was prime minister for 22 years," said Najib to loud cheers and applause from the some 4,000 audience members, mostly consisting of MIC members.

Subramaniam, earlier, in outlining Najib's contributions, said that the Indian community were thankful for the prime minister's various initiatives and assistance.

The health minister even asked the crowd to stand up for a round of applause as a sign of appreciation for Najib.

Najib's arrival at the venue at the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang (Maeps) saw him enthusiastically greeted by MIC members who formed two lines on each side.

Many scrambled to shake hands with the premier and those who were lucky enough managed to snap pictures with him.

Najib, later in his speech, also said he took note of Subramaniam who had asked for two things as 'birthday presents' for MIC's 70th anniversary.

On Subramaniam's proposal for Najib to set a policy for Indians who were born or had lived in Malaya before 1957 and had yet to be given citizenship, Najib admitted that it was time for them to resolve the issue once and for all.

“It is only right that these people are given citizenship for they have sacrificed a lot for this country,” he said.

As for Subramaniam’s suggestion that boarding schools be built for Indian students from the lower income group and those from problematic families, Najib said he accepted the suggestion and even pointed out that he, himself, had proposed this previously.

“This is how we help, because if there is social mobility, not just one person will benefit but his or her entire family will also benefit,” he added.

‘BN walks the talk’

Meanwhile, Najib said he had instructed the cabinet committee on Indian affairs to put on record individuals that the government had assisted thus far.

“And that record must be passed on to every Indian in this country so that they will understand and realise that the BN not only talks but walks the talk and delivers for the benefit of all communities.

“We are not like the opposition who talk, talk and talk. But we walk the talk and we deliver,” he said.

Ending his speech, Najib also suggested that all (Indian) parties in the BN be amalgamated within MIC.

“(It is) so that it's easier for us to handle because I get requests from many, many parties now.

“So if everybody is under one roof, it’s easier for you to channel your needs, your hopes and concerns to the government,” he said.

The event last night saw the audience entertained by dance and singing performances while they enjoyed their dinner.

Also present at the dinner were MCA president Liow Tiong Lai, Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) president Joseph Kurup, former MIC president S Samy Vellu as well as other top MIC leaders.

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