

Love me as Umno president, Najib tells members
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All Umno members are reminded to safeguard the party's presidential institution because failure to do so will cause the Malay party to become weak.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said if the presidential institution was being interrupted, it would be difficult for the elected leaders to lead and carry out their duties.

"Take good care of the party and the Umno presidential institution, not me. Love me as the president because one day my successor will take over (duties of president).

"If the party is weak, who will become the leader to bring us forward? So to make sure that the party is not weak, all divisions need to keep the harmony," he said.

Najib (*photo*), who is also Umno president, said this when opening the simultaneous delegates meeting of the Bukit Gantang, Taiping, Bagan Serai and Parit Buntar Umno divisions at the Advanced Technology Training Centre (ADTEC) in Taiping today.

"As long as Umno is in power, we can head towards a good future. Don't ruin Umno, don't underestimate Umno, make sure Umno stays in power and be the greatest party in the world," stressed Najib.

'Be humble, be strong'

He also reminded Umno members to have the strength to face the current challenges because any weaknesses would affect them psychologically.

"There must be confidence, but don't be arrogant, must be humble and don't show off. We must be humble because we want to serve the people.

"If Umno cares for the people, then safeguard the branches well. Don't have factions. This is our family, if we are big hearted, a lot of problems will be solved," he said.

The Umno president also advised its leaders and members to adhere to the principle of morality to continue to be respected.

Najib said Umno members could have differences of opinion, but any contradiction of ideas needed to be addressed preferably in accordance with the party's system and constitution.

"Follow the Malay culture. The difference of opinion is normal, even husband and wife sometimes pulled a long face.

"If there are differences of opinion, there are borders that cannot be traversed. Don't try to bring down Umno's institution. We can disagree, but don't ever betray the sacred struggle," he said.

'Remember how hard it was to win back Perak'

In his 40-minute speech, Najib also challenged Umno leadership in Bukit Gantang, Taiping, Bagan Serai and Parit Buntar divisions to ensure victory for the BN in the next general election.

In the last general election, the parliamentary seats except for Bagan Serai were won by the opposition.

"After the assembly don't claw each other, please...remember how hard it was for us to get Perak back from the opposition," he said.

Earlier Perak Umno liaison chairperson Zambry Abd Kadir urged the Umno members not to let any quarters to tear the party institutions apart.

The MB said among Umno's biggest challenges currently was to deal with the people who tried to weaken the party.

The meeting was attended by more than 3,000 delegates from the four divisions.

Dominant party

Meanwhile, in Lumut, Najib said Umno remains dominant through the continuous support of its members.

For example, he said, Partai Golkar in Indonesia was regarded a dominant party just like Umno but currently the party has only one elected representative in the country's cabinet.

"Imagine, in the past, Golkar and Umno were in the same league (strength). Today Golkar does not have the same status as Umno. Currently the Congress Party in India is the opposition but BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) is more popular.

"The Liberal Democratic Party of Japan had lost before but the party has returned to power. Only Umno has remained in power," said Najib when opening the Lumut Umno Division delegates meeting in Seri Manjung, Lumut, today.

Umno will be celebrating its 70th anniversary this year.

During the opening speech, Najib who is also the prime minister, reminded Umno members to remain loyal to the party despite facing various challenges because any weakness in the party can undermine its existence.

"As a party that is in power, we need to be loyal to Umno and its struggles all the time. Do not be loyal just because of a position in the party.

"There are millions of members who do not gain positions but remain loyal to the party. There are some who 'run away' when they don't get something," he said.

'Look who's next to Kit Siang'

Najib said Umno was an inclusive party and not racist.

"In 2013 former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said I was only looking after the Chinese and not the Malays. But now who is sitting beside Lim Kit Siang and raising his hand?" asked Najib.

The prime minister said the position of Umno president has not been decided by any individual all these years, including Dr Mahathir, but rather by the more than three million members.

Najib said though Umno was facing various challenges currently, the by-elections in Kuala Kangsar (Perak) and Sungai Besar, Selangor on June 18, proved that the people are strongly behind the party and Barisan Nasional.

"The opposition had wanted to use the by-elections as a referendum but instead it resulted in stronger support for Umno and BN. We are not celebrating our victory but the target is to win big in the coming general election," he said.

Najib who is also the finance minister later announced that a request from Zambry for a multi-purpose hall in Manjung had been approved.

- *Bernama*

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