

Najib announces additional RM200k for silver, bronze medallists
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak announced an additional RM200,000 for those who bagged silver and bronze medals in the Rio 2016 Olympics.

Prior to this, he said, the government pledged RM300,000 for those who won silver.

“Today, the government will add another RM200,000, making it (the total) half a million.

“We will also add another RM200,000 for the bronze medalist. (National cyclist) Azizulhasni (Awang) will receive this (reward),” he added.

Najib was speaking at the Bunga Raya Complex at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) during the welcoming ceremony for the Malaysian athletes this afternoon.

The prime minister also praised the welcome extended to the Olympians, describing it as extraordinary.

“This is great. Although the glitter of gold is still not in our hands, we still recorded the best Olympics performance in the nation’s history,” he said.

Najib, who was accompanied by his wife Rosmah Mansor, hoped that in the next Olympics in Tokyo in 2020, Malaysia would be able to win gold.

He also said that he would discuss with Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin and chef-de-mission Al-Amin Abdul Majid about better efforts for the improvement of sports in Malaysia.

The success of the Rio Olympics athletes, Najib added, has made their return today a special day for the entire country.

“They are like 'rock stars', with all the celebrations today,” he said, adding that world's fastest sprinter Usain Bolt had credited 'dedication' for his success.

He also called on everyone to pay more attention in realising the country's goals in sports.

"Everyone including coaches, sports associations, government, private sector and the rakyat have to work together in making the country's goals come true.

"We have to stand strong together to make sure that our athletes can become successful.

"I want sports to succeed because it is not about the colour of your skin, your ethnicity or your religion but a national athlete who represents all Malaysian people," he said.

Meanwhile, Khairy told a press conference later that when he was at Rio de Janeiro, not a single one of the athletes mentioned anything about further reward.

He recounted a conversation he had with Malaysian badminton ace Lee Chong Wei, where he brought up the matter of offering more rewards to the athletes.

"But he (Lee) said, 'There's no need to bring this up, because we are doing this for the country'," Khairy recalled.

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