

Don't leave, let's talk, Najib tells Sabah

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said he would continue to be open-minded and humble when handling grievances and requests of the people to ensure the bigger agenda is achieved.

"For example, I am open in the issue of the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) as enshrined in the Federal Constitution and if there are differences in opinion, the door is always open for discussion.

Bernama reported Najib saying this when opening the Pasokmogun Kadazandusun Murut Bersatu Party's (Upko) Convention at Pusat Kebudayaan Sabah in Penampang today.

"I do not want to take away the rights of the people of Sabah. I want to defend the rights of the people of Sabah instead. But do not say we want to leave Malaysia.

"No... no... no. We are in a family, we will always be together in Malaysia," he said to a loud applause from the 1,750 Upko delegates.

Najib said he would ensure Sabah continued to develop and progress in tandem with the progress and development achieved by other states in the peninsula.

Urging Malaysians to look forward and envision the bigger picture so as to fulfill the agenda of becoming a class one nation, he said Malaysians must not be trapped and embroiled in minor issues because such action would only result in the population losing the race to other countries that are ready to move forward.

"We have a big agenda. We do not want to be a second rate country, no. We don't want to be a mediocre country. We want Malaysia to be among the best, among the best nations on this earth.

"That is why I had proposed the 2050 National Transformation (TN50) agenda. TN50 is a dialogue process from the grassroots. What is the objective?

"The objective is to determine the road map to place Malaysia at the peak of success and become a 'first rate nation' that all of us can be proud of," he said.

Also present were Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman, Upko acting president Madius Tangau, Upko honorary president and Malaysian ambassador to Vatican City, Bernard Dompok, and leaders of BN component parties.

The prime minister denied claims and accusations by a former BN leader that the ruling party was not democratic because during that particular leader's administration, hundreds of people were detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA).

"Now that person is claiming I am not democratic. Who is more democratic, the person who had detained hundreds under ISA before? Now he is claiming others are not democratic," he said.

Najib said the people now cannot be fooled because they are wise and know the difference between glass and precious stone.

"I am humble... I did not say I am perfect, but the person who was not perfect should not say others are not perfect," said Najib.

When touching on the issue of illegal immigrants in Sabah, Najib said Philippines president Rodrigo Duterte had during a bilateral meeting in Putrajaya recently, agreed to the deportation of illegal immigrants from the Philippines.

Najib said under the agreement, about 7,000 illegal immigrants from the Philippines would be deported and the temporary detention centre would be used for future offenders.

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