



**We must defend
Putrajaya at all costs:
Najib
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Umno president Najib Abdul Razak today issued a rallying cry to party members at the 61st Umno general assembly to defend Putrajaya at all costs.

"Even if our bodies are crushed and our lives lost, brothers and sisters, whatever happens, we must defend Putrajaya," said Najib, who is also prime minister.

He shouted 'Hidup Umno' three times and was greeted by a big round of applause from the thousands of delegates at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

With two by-elections next month and a general election expected next year, Najib reminded Umno members about the numerous challenges face by the party and how it had managed to survive each successive crisis because its leaders were steadfast in their struggle.

"In every crisis, Umno managed to revive itself despite that everything seemed to be against us," he said.

"Can we believe that Malaysia's success can be maintained by our rivals, who are trampling over each other for power? Can Malaysians trust those who have shown nothing but the desire to take the throne?"

"Are we willing to hand our beloved Malaysia to the traitor of race and country?" he asked, eliciting shouts of "no" at each punctuation.

Today's opening ceremony began with a parade and raising of the Umno flag at Dataran Putra at 8.30am, followed by the policy speech delivered by Najib in Dewan Merdeka before 4,907 delegates.

Five-day meet

A dinner function to mark the general assembly will be held in Dewan Tun Razak I at 8pm tonight.

The Umno general assembly this time is held for five days beginning yesterday with the simultaneous opening of the party's Wanita, Youth and Puteri assemblies by Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also deputy prime minister.

In conjunction with this year's general assembly, a two-day international seminar on "Creating Global Citizens: Media Liberalisation and New Political Realities" was held from Monday.

Such a forum, held for the first time, had some 400 participants including 63 from 22 political parties in 20 countries and 54 Umno overseas club members, as well as political analysts.

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