

**Najib hails contribution of Malaysian Chinese**  
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Incoming premier, Najib Abdul Razak, today hailed the ethnic Chinese community's contribution to the nation, in a bid to mend ties with minorities who deserted the coalition in the 2008 elections.

The comments from Najib, who is expected to be sworn into power on Friday, came after an angry debate over the role of minorities in the multi-racial country's independence struggle.

"I would like to thank the Chinese community for their many contributions to our nation's development," Najib told editors of a local Chinese paper, according to a statement from his office.

"The Malaysian Chinese community has, is now, and will forever play a vital role in the fabric of our nation," he added.

**MCA: Stop rewriting the facts of history**

Najib last week became president of Umno, which with its coalition partners in Barisan Nasional, were hammered in elections a year ago as minorities shifted towards the opposition.

The opposition benefited from a rising sense of "Islamisation" of Malaysia, and fears that minorities' rights are being eroded.

Najib pledged to "develop a government that respects the voices of all Malaysians" and said the government "recognises and respects the contributions of all people in building Malaysia".

His comments came after a senior leader said at last week's Umno assembly that independence and later developments were forged by "Umno and our Malay rulers and no one else".

MCA has called for a stop to "rewriting the facts of history or denying the efforts of other races in helping to fight for the country's independence". Malaysia gained its independence from Britain in 1957.