

**Gov't aid to continue for Malays: PM  
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Umno president Najib Abdul Razak today hit out at Malays who called for an end to affirmative actions for the community.

Although he did not mention names, it is obvious that the prime minister was referring to the Anwar Ibrahim-led PKR which wants to introduce the New Economic Agenda which will provide aid for the needy irrespective of race.

Calling these Malays the 'products' of affirmative actions themselves, Najib said they now fail to look at the big picture.

He also stressed that it was not only Umno which needed to reform, but the entire Malay community must revamp its mind set.

"Today we see how the products of these affirmative actions proudly thump their chest and proclaim that they no longer need the crutches and can stand on their own feet," he said in his first policy speech as Umno president.

"It is true that they are now capable enough to do away with the crutches, but what about the other Malays who still need help?

"Is it fair to deny the crutches to those who deserve it, just because those who have benefitted from it are no longer dependent on it?" he asked.

The Umno president said it cannot be denied that there is a huge middle class among the Malays now, something which was not there before the New Economic Policy (NEP) was launched in 1971.

Furthermore, he added that the policy had also given birth to a large number of Malay professionals in the country.

"So we must understand that the issue is not about providing aid, but about how this is managed and administered.

"The fact is, the Malays are still lagging behind and require assistance in the overall scheme of things. This is the main factor," he said.

Critics say the policy has failed and that its biggest beneficiaries have been Malay entrepreneurs who cash in on an array of perks including discounts on property purchases and specially allocated government projects.

### **Of dementia and policies**

Earlier, Najib drew a link between dementia and the implementation of policies when explaining why the NEP had failed to meet its objective.

He said that one cannot hope to reap different results by doing something in the same manner over and over again.

According to the prime minister, this is nothing short of madness.

He also said the government cannot be too dogmatic in the implementation process to the point that the main focus is on the method and approach as opposed to the outcome of the policies.

"This is because the tools and approaches can change over the course of time.

"What is appropriate now may become obsolete 10 years from now just like the horse carriage and telegraph," he added.

"If over the past four decades we failed to achieve our (NEP) goals using the same strategy, isn't it time for us to think of a new way of achieving our dreams?"

Najib said when the NEP was formulated, the target was for the Malay and bumiputera equity ownership to increase from 2.4 percent to 30 percent within two decades.

"Even up to the point the NEP ended, this target could not be realised. Malay and bumiputera equity stood at 19.2 percent.

"Therefore, this aim was continued under the National Development Policy," he added.

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