

**Umno not 'racist or extremist party': Najib**  
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Prime Minister Najib Razak today reiterated that Umno is not a party that practised racism but had always upheld the principle of wanting to be fair to all.



"As Muslims were are guided by the teachings of the Quran whereby God commanded that if in leading or punishing, it must be done fairly to all," he said when opening Umno's 'Juara Rakyat' (Champion of the People) programme in Bukit Beruntung near Rawang.

"If we are to say Umno is racist, it is denying history. Umno has never been a racist or an extremist party," he added.

Also present were his wife Rosmah Mansor, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, Rural and Regional Development Minister Shafie Apdal, Defence Minister Zahid Hamidi, Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein as well as other leaders of BN component parties.

In his speech, Najib, who is also Umno president, stressed that Umno had never at any time intended to grab power for itself because besides following Allah's commandments, the party had always respected the roles and position of other races in the country.

"Till today, we (Umno) are protecting the interests of the other races besides championing those of the Malays," he said.

"This our concept. As such, don't point fingers and say Umno is racist... when churches are burned, Umno is bad. I wish to categorically state here, we condemn the acts and want to be fair... if the police can find who committed the acts, we will punish them accordingly," he stressed.

**Don't reject 1Malaysia**

He also stressed that because of the incidents, people should not reject the 1Malaysia concept that was introduced when he took over as prime minister in April last year.

Najib, who is also BN chairman, said that if seen in historical terms, no other party could claim to be the people's champion other than the Alliance.

"Take for instance the opposition to the Malayan Union. Who brought about the spirit of nationalism in the country if not for Umno?"

"And when it came time to gain independence, who went to London to demand independence? It was Umno together with leaders representing the Chinese and Indian communities, which now come under the banner of MCA and MIC.

"After independence was gained, who brought about the changes in towns and the rural areas of our country, fighting poverty, bringing in infrastructure in the towns and rurals, opening up land schemes for the landless, housing, roads, schools? Who built up our country if not for Umno and the BN," he said.

It was Umno and the BN component parties that handled various crises that affected the nation including a communist insurgency and confrontation with Indonesia besides economic ones, he said, adding that at about the time of independence, the Malays could have formed the government by themselves but the leaders did not take this path.

Instead, he said, they, including Malaysia's first prime minister the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al Haj, invited the other races to share power from the very beginning.

"When the May 13 tragedy happened, we took over but did not impose martial law. Umno did not seize power but contained the situation and when normalcy returned, we got back and expanded the Alliance by forming the BN.

But if it were to be another country, the majority race might have taken such an opportunity to grab power for itself, he said.

### **Will ISA be used?**

When asked to comment on yesterday's arson attacks on three churches around Kuala Lumpur at a press conference later, Najib said so far the government did not have any intention to bring up the matter to the Conference of Rulers.

Asked if the Internal Security Act would be used against the culprits, he said Malaysia had sufficient laws to punish those responsible.

He said what was more important now was to get the evidence and identify the perpetrators.

Commenting on the manhandling of a priest yesterday, Najib said: "In any society, there are people who like to break the law and take the law in their own hands.

"You cannot judge the reaction of one or two individual as indicative of the party's position, which is very clear on the issue," he said.

- *Bernama*

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