

**Najib: Malay rights fully protected in Constitution**  
**Malaysianmirror.com**  
**21 October 2010**

KUALA LUMPUR - The privileges and rights of the Malays are fully protected under the Federal Constitution and cannot be disputed, and this fact should be accepted by all races in the country, said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Najib, who is also the Umno president, said this fact was agreed upon by the founding fathers representing all the races in the country when it gained independence.

"Even if the two-thirds majority is gained in Parliament, nothing can be changed without the consent of the Council represented by the nine Malay Rulers.

"In other words, it would be pointless to quarrel and use this provision on citizenship to threaten the other races because the provision enshrined is so concrete even if an emergency were to be declared, it still cannot be touched," he said when delivering his keynote address at the 61st Umno General Assembly 2010, at the Dewan Merdeka, Putra World Trade Centre, here Thursday.

When delivering his speech with the theme 'Empowering the Race to Lead Prosperity', Najib pointed out that efforts by certain groups to question the position of the Malays as a race whose privileges are protected, had clearly caused uneasiness and dissatisfaction towards the Malays who are noted for their accommodating attitude.

"This feeling of discontentment has begun to spread and may destroy the racial harmony which we have nurtured for so long," he said to loud applause from the more than 4,000 delegates and observers.

Najib said that after gaining independence for 53 years and that Malaysians were now facing relentless pressure on the main thrusts in racial relations which had existed all this while, this national polemic could possibly pose a threat to national solidarity.

"What poses a problem under these circumstances is that there will be tension when history is ignored or forgotten as time goes by, or when there are irresponsible groups who try to re-interpret all this to suit their interests or narrow agenda," he said.

Najib said the Malays had actually made the biggest sacrifice to achieve independence, when they were willing to share the ownership of 'Tanah Melayu', which was their motherland, with the other races.

"The acceptance of citizenship based on the principles of 'jus soli' or the right of place of birth compared to the principles of 'jus sanguinis' or the right of blood, had instantly transformed the socio-political landscape of Tanah Melayu for ever," he said.

Najib said if the doubts over the motive, trustworthiness and sincerity towards each other still existed within the people in the country, it could worsen and destroy what had been built by the past leaders for more than 50 years.

He said the people in the country should appreciate the concept of the 'loyalty pledge' and respect the 'noble consensus' which saw the Malays and the non-Malays willing to 'reciprocate' for their common good when championing the country's independence.

"The non-Malays were willing to accept the principle on the special privileges as contained in Article 153 of the Federal Constitution.

Subsequently, in principle, the Malaysian citizenship was no longer based on equality but had been adapted to the reality that existed for the sake of the long-term national objectives and interests.

He said the position of the Malays and Bumiputeras and the interests of thother races in terms of politics, had been enshrined as a national social contract, printed in the Federal Constitution, and everyone now must respect this noble consensus for national continuity and survival.

"They are securely locked in articles Chapter 3 on citizenship, Article 38 concerning the Council of Rulers, Article 152 concerning the National Language and Article 153 which concerned, among others, the allocation of service and permit quotas for the Malays," he said.

Najib said amendments to these articles could not be carried out without the consent of the 'Council of Rulers' under Article 159 of the Federal Constitution.

"They are further strengthened by Article 10 Clause 4, which empowers Parliament to make legislations, prohibit any act that questions any article, rights, status, position, privileges, sovereignty or the rights of sovereignty already stated or protected by the provisions in Chapter 3, Articles 152, 153 and 181," he said.

Najib said such matters should not be discussed at any forum because it was feared that any debate on them could cause uneasiness and incite 'primordial instinct' between the various ethnic groups.

The prime minister reminded the people that history had proven that regardless of how progressive a country or civilisation was, failure to handle the primordial instinct properly could lead to severe injustice.

"In the 20th century, we have been exposed to cases of punishments meted without trial in the United States, the holocaust tragedy in Europe, the slaughtering of Palestinians in West Asia and the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Rwanda.

"Imagine the outcome if every generation of Malaysians take the stand to question the rationale of the national social contract which had been reached through consensus by the past leaders," he said. - Bernama

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