

PM: Unnecessary to commemorate May 13 riots
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PUTRAJAYA - Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said Wednesday it was unnecessary to commemorate the racial riots of May 13.

"We should regard it as an event in the annals of history from which we can learn from ... as a demarcation for us so that it will not recur," he said.

Najib was asked to comment on a proposal in the "Cuit" column of the Utusan Malaysia daily for May 13 to be commemorated, similar to the racial riots of 21 July 1964 in Singapore which the republic observes as Racial Harmony Day.

Columnist Zaini Hassan had made the suggestion after Penang Opposition Leader Azhar Ibrahim was suspended on Nov 1 for six months for having allegedly made "May 13" threats in the state assembly sitting.

Although the proposal was objected to by the opposition pact which lodged a police report claiming that it was seditious in nature, many quarters have expressed support saying it was a positive move to strengthen unity.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin had said the government was prepared to consider the proposal to commemorate the May 13 incident, but added that the government had yet to receive any proposal or give it any thought.

Najib, when asked about the changes to be made to the Umno leadership, said he would look into the matter as he had been preoccupied with nursing himself back to health after being afflicted with chicken pox.

"I am thinking about it ... I was indisposed for two weeks due to illness(chicken pox). I am back to work now, and will look into it," he said.

At the Umno general assembly last month, Najib, who is also Umno president, said changes would be made to the Umno leadership at certain levels for the party to be better prepared to face the next general election.

Asked whether he would reshuffle the Cabinet, the prime minister said: "Don't tell me I should disclose that (to you). If there is a (Cabinet) reshuffle, then there will be one ... if there is none, then there will be none." - Bernama

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