

Najib: Warisan Merdeka Tower to go ahead if commercially viable
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KUALA LUMPUR - Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said Tuesday that Permodalan Nasional Bhd's proposed 100-storey Warisan Merdeka tower will go ahead only if it is commercially viable, dismissing Dr Mahathir Mohamad's concerns that the skyscraper if built could cause a property glut.

Besides the commercial aspect, Najib said the project must also contribute towards the larger economic development within the particular area and provide business opportunities.

"The project must satisfy these conditions and if the conditions are met, it will go ahead.

"It must provide the impetus and catalyst for a greater Kuala Lumpur," he told reporters after delivering a keynote address at the 7th Asean Finance Ministers' Investors Seminar entitled "Discovering Tomorrow's Asean" here.

Former prime minister Dr Mahathir said Monday there was no need for another high tower in the country yet because there were signs of property glut.

"I think, we don't need any tower higher than the (Twin Towers) as yet as we have a bit of surplus of buildings," said Dr M warning that Malaysia could be heading towards Dubai's direction which saw the country's property market collapse in 2008.

Najib, who is Finance Minister, said it was up to Permodalan Nasional to do the financial calculation.

On a perception that Warisan Merdeka would overshadow the 88-storey Petronas Twin Towers, which was credited to Dr Mahathir, he said: "That is a totally frivolous statement. We are talking about continuity.

"What Tun Mahathir has done is admirable but what we need to do is build on his success and move on and develop Malaysia."

Besides, Najib said, Warisan Merdeka was project of 10 years and beyond and the area around Stadium Merdeka, where the project is proposed to take place, was a strategic area.

"It is a long term project. It is not to be viewed 2-3 years.

"If you look at the skyline of Kuala Lumpur in 2020, it cannot be the same as today. Pudong in Shanghai has so many skyscrapers. Certainly, much much more.

"Let us try to visualise the KL in the year 2020. Let us look at the long term perspective. After all, if Vision 2020 is achieved it is about a vision that was initiated by Tun Mahathir himself," he said and Bernama reported.

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