

Kuan Yew's comments misleading, says Najib

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BANGI: Malaysia yesterday ticked off Singapore's Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew for saying that Malaysian Chinese were being marginalised systematically.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak described the statement as naughty, adding: "I do not know his real motive but his comment is something that should not have been made in the first place. It is a comment that we can do without and is not appreciated at all. It is not accurate, has political impact and is very misleading."

Lee told a forum in Singapore last Friday that it was vi-

tal for Singapore to stand up to its bigger neighbours, Indonesia and Malaysia.

"We need a government that will have the gumption and skill to say no to our neighbours in a very quiet and polite way that does not provoke them into doing something silly."

Lee was also quoted as saying that the attitude of neighbouring Malaysia and Indonesia towards Singapore was shaped by the way they treat their own ethnic Chinese minorities. "Our neighbours both have problems with their Chinese. They are successful. They are hardworking and, therefore, they are systematically marginalised."

Indonesia and Malaysia "want Singapore, to put it sim-

ply, to be like their Chinese — compliant", Lee said.

Najib said the government had no intention to sideline or marginalise non-Bumiputeras.

The government, he added, had never adopted a policy which aimed at hindering the progress of the non-Bumiputeras as all it wanted was nothing but fairness and equal distribution of wealth for all races.

He said it would be up to the Cabinet to make a stand on the matter.

Najib was speaking to reporters after handing over Amanah Saham Bumiputera (ASB) Sejahtera account books to 245 hardcore poor from the rural areas.

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