

# Najib: I did not apologise

## DPM refutes report on Ambalat issue

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has refuted a foreign report that Malaysia had apologised to Indonesia over the presence of Malaysian warships and aircraft in Ambalat waters in the Sulawesi Sea earlier this month.

"The report claimed that I have apologised to the Indonesian defence minister but the issue of apologising does not arise.

"I did not apologise to the Indonesian defence minister when I was in Bali recently," he told reporters after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting here yesterday.

Najib, who is also Defence Minister, was asked to comment on an AFP report quoting Indonesia's Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono as saying that Najib had apologised for recent incidents related to their joint border.

The report also said that Malaysian warships and planes had crossed into Indonesian territorial waters earlier this month, near an oil exploration area known as the Ambalat Block (Blocks ND6 and ND7).

Najib said he had merely mentioned to his counterpart that there must be an agreement to avoid untoward incidents.

"He (Indonesian Defence Minister) agreed that we have to hold on strongly to the rules of engagement, especially at the military leadership level on the ground," he added.

Najib said they also agreed that command-

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DATUK SERI NAJIB TUN RAZAK

ing officers of ships should also act wisely, avoid being emotional and abide by the rules of engagement.

"We take into consideration the good political relations of leaders of both countries. There is no reason why the Ambalat issue cannot be negotiated between both countries, which have good relations.

"So, the question of apologising does not arise," he added.

The dispute concerning the Ambalat sea, which said to be rich in oil and gas deposits, had previously raised strong and emotional reactions from Indonesians following the overlapping claims by Malaysia and Indonesia.

On the Machap by-election, Najib said Barisan Nasional would go all out to achieve a big victory.

He said that Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam had briefed the Umno supreme council meeting about preparations for the by-election.