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# I'm a true party man, says Najib

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**LONDON:** "I am a true party man" and not the son who destroys the party his father has helped to set up in a move to gain control of it, Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said here yesterday.

Najib, the eldest son of second prime minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, said he "believed the transfer of power (in Umno) should be done in the traditional, conventional way rather than by creating factions".

He said this during a question-and-answer session after delivering a talk on "Malaysia in the Face of New Global Challenges" at Chatham House, the home of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

The talk was jointly organised by the institute and the Asean-United Kingdom Business Forum (AUBF).

Najib, the deputy prime minister, said this when asked by a participant why he had not taken over the leadership of the country after the poor performance of the Barisan Nasional (BN) and Umno in the recent general election.

The BN had failed to recapture Kelantan from PAS and lost Kedah, Penang, Perak and Selangor to the Pakatan Rakyat opposition alliance. It also failed to garner a two-thirds majority in Parliament.

Najib said people could give their views and that it was not a question of having courage or being a coward but "it is just (that) as a person you have core values".

"And I believe what is important (is that) whatever position you take, it must be a core value personal to you," he said.

"I come from a family where my father helped build the party and I am not the son to destroy the party. I want to continue to build the party further."

Najib said Umno was now at its lowest point and "if you create a serious fight for the leadership, Umno will be further weakened and not be able to face the challenges of (the next) general election".

"What is there in inheriting a position when you lose in the general election. I don't want to lead the party to defeat," he said.

Earlier, in his speech, Najib touched on the need to revitalise bilateral relations between Malaysia and Britain, saying that it was now "in a state of benign neglect".

Najib said he hoped to see a British prime minister lead a strong delegation to Malaysia. The last visit by a British prime minister was in 1993 when Sir John Major visited the country. - Bernama