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Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	8/1/2011

# PM: We did attend dinner hosted by king

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said he attended a dinner hosted by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin on Dec 24 along with Pas leaders out of respect for the king, but refused to comment further.

"We have to respect the understanding of the meeting.

"The Yang di-Pertuan Agong wanted it to be private," he said at the Prime Minister's Office, here, yesterday.

He was asked to comment on allegations by the opposition that Umno had used the king to get Pas spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat to attend the dinner.

Since it was first reported, speculation had been rife over what took place at Istana Terengganu in Kuala Lumpur, including that of political cooperation between Umno and Pas.

Najib has, however, clarified that they did not discuss political issues during the dinner which was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Pas president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang and Pas secretary-general Datuk Mustafa Ali.

Najib's comment follows a statement by Nik Aziz who decided to attend the dinner to show his respect to the king.

On a separate matter, Najib said that yesterday's meeting with Barisan Nasional members of parliament was part of the preparations for the general election.

"Everything we do is geared towards the general election because we want to be re-elected and serve the people."

Najib, who was left bemused with the suggestion that the meeting was linked to a cabinet reshuffle, said that he wanted to meet the members of parliament to update himself on the situation of each constituency.

He also questioned why a case against a cabinet member, which had allegedly occurred in 2007, was brought up only now.

Although he did not mention names, it is believed that Najib was referring to Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim, who was recently accused of rape.

"He has made his statement and he stands by it and is willing to be investigated. So let the process take its course.

"We cannot prejudge and we cannot pronounce anything against someone unless proper investigations have taken place."



Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya yesterday. He says meeting the Barisan Nasional MPs is part of preparations for the general election. — NST picture by Affendi Mohamed