



PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA

PERDANA LIBRARY
PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION
NEWSPAPER CLIPPING

Newspaper	The Star
Date	24/1/2013

Najib feels for people of Palestine in more ways than one

The Star - 24/1/2013

CAIRO: The Palestinian cause is close to Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's heart through a personal connection - two foster children.

The Prime Minister had adopted the two Palestinian children by way of sponsorship via a Malaysian charity organisation when he was the Education Minister, and later Defence Minister.

"It is one of the reasons why the issue is close to my heart and why visiting Palestine has been something I have always wanted to do,"

he said, adding that the children were from the West Bank.

"I used to send money to them every month."

Najib said he sponsored the children through the Malaysian Social Research Institute (MSRI), founded by the late Dr Elijah Gordon - a renowned activist for the Palestinian cause.

Asked whether he still kept in touch with the two children, Najib said he had lost touch with them after Gordon's death.

He suggested that such adoption programmes be revived so that others could also foster Palestinian children.

On his visit to Gaza, Najib said he was saddened by the devastation he saw because most of the Israeli targets during its attacks in November were homes and government offices.

"These had no significant military value," Najib pointed out.

On a lighter note, the Prime Minister related his unusual car ride

with Ismail Haniyeh, the Prime Minister in Gaza, who took him on a tour of the damaged sites.

Describing the speed in which Ismail's driver took the vehicle to the ruins, Najib said the ride was "rather bumpy".

The fast pace left some of the other vehicles in his entourage far behind.

Those at the tail-end even lost their way after racing through over 100km per hour along the uneven, narrow roads and sharp bends.

"Ismail wanted to show me more sites in addition to the ones listed in the official programme," Najib said.

These included the bombed government offices and homes and a visit to the house of the family of Ahmed El Jabari, the commander of the Qassam brigade, the armed wing of the Hamas.

Ahmed's death sparked the Hamas' eight-day war with Israel.

"At one point, Ismail shouted at his driver, reminding him to slow down," Najib said with a laugh.