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PM: I'm aware of sentiment

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'Muhyiddin's removal made in the interest of politics, not to hurt Johoreans'

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PASIR GUDANG: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak says he is aware of the feelings of Johor Umno members following his shock decision to remove Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as deputy prime minister.

During his speech at the opening of the Pasir Gudang Umno delegates meeting here yesterday, Najib said he had no intention to hurt the people of Johor.

"It was a very difficult decision, but for certain reasons, it had to be made in the interest of politics, not to hurt the Johoreans," he added.

This was Najib's first visit to Johor after Muhyiddin was removed last month. Muhyiddin was formerly the mentri besar from 1986 to 1995.

Admitting that he understood the sentiments in Johor, which all this while had been a stronghold for Umno and Barisan Nasional, Najib said he appreciated the trust that the state Umno had given him to continue steering the party.

On social media, Najib said Umno needs to create more "keyboard warriors" to fend off negative perceptions against the party in the social media.

"The worsening dissemination of slander shows that the cyberspace is the new battlefield compared to the physical world," he added.

Umno, he said, is now facing severe challenges because the Opposition knows how to manipulate the new media.

"The Opposition merely needs to create the perception of doubts and issues.



Meet and greet: Najib mingling with the guests at the Pasir Gudang Umno delegates meeting.

"They only need to raise issues in the minds of the people, which would be enough to erode their belief in the party," he added.

Najib gave an example of the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) issue, where allegations were flying in cyberspace that the sovereign wealth fund suffered losses of RM42bil.

He stressed that the facts were otherwise, but had been twisted around on social media so much so it had caused negative perceptions

on 1MDB.

"I can say in the next five months, 1MDB's debts will be reduced significantly. I or 1MDB will be making the announcements on this in stages," said Najib, who is also Finance Minister.

"1MDB is not running at a loss because we still have assets. Its debts can be settled. This is the perspective I want to put forward," he added.

Meanwhile, four Sabah Umno divisions gave their support to Najib

as party president.

The Kota Kinabalu, Tuaran, Putatan and Batu Sapi divisions, which held their meetings over the weekend, reiterated their support for Najib to continue leading the party and the country as Prime Minister.



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