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M'sia to S'pore: Our future is as partners

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> We're destined to be conjoined and need to cooperate, not compete: Najib

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said Malaysia and Singapore should move forward in a spirit of mutual benefit.

He called on Singaporeans not to judge Malaysia by what they may read on social media, or by politically motivated statements by certain quarters to run down Malaysia.

Najib said his Singaporean counterpart Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and he agreed that the two countries should not be encumbered by any issues associated with the past.

"The days when some considered agreement to be a form of weakness are gone.

"Our future is as partners. Indeed, recently there have even been suggestions that our two countries should formulate an Olympic bid together," he said in his blog yesterday.

Najib was among the foreign dignitaries who attended the National Day parade in conjunction with Singapore's 50th anniversary of Independence on Sunday.

Najib said he will ensure that Malaysia remains stable and safe – for guests and Malaysians alike.

"The reality is that we share your aspirations for good governance, for a strong, inclusive and sustainable economy based on sound fundamentals, and for stability, harmony and diversity.

"That is why we make good partners, and why Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and I will continue to work closely to bring real benefits to all Malaysians and Singaporeans.

Recalling the time 50 years ago when Singapore became an independent state, Najib said: "As a 12-year-old, I was aware of the significance of Malaysia gaining a new neighbour and of our two countries settling our boundaries – both to continue independently on the adventure of independence, with all

the opportunities and perils that developing nations faced in the 1960s.

"Of course, we had a special interest in Singapore; history and geography bound us together."

Citing a Malay proverb, "Sedangkan lidah lagi tergigit", Najib said: "In other words, we were destined to be conjoined and need to cooperate, not compete".

Najib said Malaysia and Singapore have had differences, but they have always achieved the most when they have worked pragmatically together, "and we have much to be proud of".

"The changed approach between our two countries was emphasised soon after I became prime minister."

He said the win-win solution of the Points of Agreement in 2010 – after a 20-year deadlock – was an example of how the two countries chose to move forward in a spirit of mutual benefit, and put a long-standing stumbling block behind them.

"I am pleased with the results of our closer relations, and look forward to achieving more." – Bernama



Najib with the Sultan of Johor, Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar, while they were in Singapore to attend the republic's 50th anniversary of Independence on Sunday.