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'Top posts must always be strong'

RESPECT: Support office-bearers, says PM

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FOR the country to achieve its goals, the prime minister and Umno president posts must remain strong at all times.

Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said undivided support for office-bearers would ensure stable leadership and would make Malaysia more resilient in facing global challenges, especially where the economy is concerned.

"It's not about the individual. It is

important to ensure both institutions remain strong and respected."

Najib said he always supported his predecessors as he believed it helped them remain strong when facing challenges in their time.

"If we want to talk about problems, I would say we are facing less problems now.

"In the 22 years under Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's premiership, the country faced bigger challenges — the de-registration of Umno in 1987, the 1997 economic crisis and the sacking of then deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (1998).

"It was worse than it is now. The



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi at the Kepala Batas Umno delegates' meeting yesterday.
Bernama pic

ringgit went into free fall — corporate debts were in dollars, our banks were undercapitalised and we had to peg the ringgit — but in the end, we overcame the crisis," Najib said, adding it was strong support from leaders and members that enabled Umno to reorganise and strengthen itself to win in the general election.

Najib also said many were easily influenced by "the game of perception" created by those against the government.

"If an issue is harped upon every day, if a lie is repeated many times, it will soon be accepted as the truth," Najib said, adding that his stand on criticism has always been: "You can do it through proper channels but once outside, we must have the same voice and stand."

Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional chairman, was here to open the division's delegates' meeting, where he also announced additional allocation for all members of parliament soon. Currently, they receive RM5

million each annually.

In Kota Baru, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed said Malaysia sustained its foreign investment flow despite facing various issues.

He will next week announce the figures for the first six months of the year.

Mustapa said according to Bank Negara's second quarter report, foreign investment this year was more than RM12 billion and that the figure would rise.