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MAN OF THE HOUR

Najib knows he cannot please everybody

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QUOTING an English saying "if you wish to please everybody, in the end you please no one", Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak has hit the bullseye.

As leader of the biggest Malay party and prime minister, I'm sure he's reminding everyone to accept that he will not and cannot base his decisions for the benefit of everybody.

How can you accomplish that when your party has 3.5 million members, plus other component parties? Such a leader will be beset with internal problems with all manner of demands put to him, not to mention the hopes and expectations of Malaysians.

In a mildly amusing example, Najib spoke of people, including bloggers, who came to him for financial assistance but then sulked when he said no. Of course, his opening speech for

this year's Umno general assembly was directed at a larger audience.

Top of the list is surely former Umno president Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Umno deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and their supporters. He reminded Dr Mahathir that he had never rebelled against him. Indeed, Najib supported Dr Mahathir during the Umno leadership tussle of 1987.

Najib explained to the delegates his hopes for Umno, why they must continue to support the leadership, how he is handling the Malaysia Development Bhd issue, the fact that the country's economic performance continues to be recognised internationally, why the Goods and Services Tax has proven to be a good move and how Malaysia's interest is safeguarded in the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement.

Najib also on Umno's less-than-publicised record on helping Malays succeed in society, raising the educational standards of Universiti Teknologi Mara, assisting Sabah and Sarawak develop, and also the party's effort to project Islam in the right manner.

He highlighted the reasons for the people to continue to reject an opposition led by DAP, which continuously fractures, once in 1995 then 2004 and again this year. "That's DAP, which is never loyal to its allies," he said.

Najib pointed out how badly Pas, a former ally, was treated by DAP, now that the Islamic party is no longer in the opposition.

He reminded the delegates how a PKR representative in Penang cried at the Penang state legislative assembly about the Penang government's inaction to help Malays there. "Who exactly is being ruthless?" said Najib,

who stressed that no such incidents had happened under Umno and Barisan's administration.

The delegates, judging by the reception given to Najib, have given a solid mandate to their president to continue on the present path. The only speculation and gossip are how much longer the deputy president will continue to hold on to his post.

Najib has said that he needs a good deputy to be his sidekick, someone who can support him unequivocally. Whether Muhyiddin stays or is replaced will continue to be asked for the foreseeable future. Whatever action he takes, Najib knows he will not be able to please everybody.

AHMAD KASSIM,
Kuala Lumpur