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'Nothing to hide' dialogue with Najib

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> PM will field questions on controversial issues in a no-holds-barred session

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak will hold a dialogue session entitled "nothing to hide" with some 1,500 people from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society groups on June 5 at Dewan Tun Hussein Onn, Putra World Trade Centre, from 9am to noon.

Organised and moderated by the Malaysian Volunteer Lawyers Association (SukaGuam), the session will give participants an opportunity to ask questions regarding Najib's leadership in government.

SukaGuam chairman Datuk Khairul Anwar Rahmat said this will be a "two-way dialogue session" where the prime minister will be on hand to answer any queries by NGOs on that day.

"There will be no restriction as to what can be asked during the dialogue session," he said, adding that all questions regarding the

implementation of Goods and Services Tax and the controversial government investment arm iMalaysia Development Berhad (iMDB) will be answered by Najib.

He said the objective of the dialogue is to dispel people's doubts and restore confidence in the government.

When asked if former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who has been the biggest critic of Najib's administration, was invited to the dialogue as a representative of his NGO Yayasan Perdana, Khairul Anwar said he is not sure but he will personally invite the former premier.

"This is an open forum; if Tun Mahathir wants to come, we have no issues," he said.

Khairul Anwar, however, said that no political parties were invited.

"The media agencies - print, online and even bloggers - are invited as we all share the common mission of bringing truth to the people," he said.

He also said if the dialogue gets a good



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Najib receives a souvenir from GoAsean Channel Astro TV host Jonathan Putra after the launch of the travel channel in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Looking on are Astro chairman Tun Zaki Tun Azmi (centre) and secretary-general of Culture and Tourism Ministry Datuk Dr Ong Hong Peng.

response, he will consider bringing it to other states.

Meanwhile, Najib yesterday urged the private sector to support and maximise "GoAsean", the first 24/7 Asean travel channel to reach out to the region.

Pointing out that this channel is an initiative of Malaysia as chair of Asean this year, he said the

government hopes that it will grow into a vehicle that can help further enhance cooperation among the 10-member states of Asean.

"It is estimated that Asean's middle class will reach 400 million by 2020, more than that of Brazil, France, Germany, the UK and the US combined.

"According to a recent report, 44% of consumers

surveyed said they would spend spare cash on vacations.

"So there is great opportunity here for us to share information about travel within our region," he said when launching the GoAsean Astro travel channel here.

Najib said this channel will provide an opportunity for Malaysians to reach out

and be exposed to new cultures and experiences in the region.

"This initiative is not only about tourism and travel. It's also about realising the vision of people-centred Asean, something which I believe is important for our region to move forward," he said.

The programme will be aired on Astro Channel 737.