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PM: Reject racial extremism

UNITY: 'People must return to basic foundations of nation'

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Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak**, accompanied by MCA president **Datuk Seri Liew Tiong Lai**, is greeted by former MCA deputy president **Tan Sri Lim Ah Lek** at MCA's 62nd annual general assembly at Wisma MCA in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Pic by Ghazali Kori

THE country must reject racial extremism and respect the Social Contract to achieve greater harmony.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, in reiterating his stand against playing up racial sentiments, said the country's foundation was based on solid unity between people of various races.

"The wisdom of our forefathers — Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, Tun Tan Cheng Lok, and Tun V.T. Sambanthan — was integration, not assimilation.

"They decided that the best way forward was based on understanding and good working relationship and trust. The sense of trust can only be founded on the basis of the then Alliance Party, now Barisan Nasional, and I believe in that."

Najib, who is BN chairman, said part of the trust was to build progressive policies, in line with the concept of *wasatiyyah* (moderation) in Islam. In the same vein, he said, while peaceful assemblies were allowed, no one should bring banners or signs that would incite racial hatred.

"We can have differences of opin-

ion. It's only natural. But in BN, we have a process of how we harmonise our differences in the coalition.

"Imagine, 13 sibiings (components) in a family. It isn't easy to manage. There will be differences, (but) what's more important is how we manage them, harmonise them and achieve a consensus so it becomes a decision that all BN component parties can subscribe to and support"

Najib said Malaysians must return to the basic foundations of the country, one that was based on national consensus — the Social Contract and Federal Constitution — which he said were the core principles of the country. The country could reach greater heights, he added, if these two aspects were defended.

"Malaysia is a great country. We have achieved much and we can do even more in the future.

"Together, if you defend the Social Contract and the constitution, I believe we can achieve great things," he said before launching MCA's 62nd annual general assembly at the

party headquarters here yesterday.

He reminded the delegates not to get embroiled with in-fighting if they wanted to remain strong and focused for the 14th General Election.

"We know that not everybody gets what he asked for. You give some, you take some. You cannot take it all. If you want more, you will have to give more. If you want more seats in government, you must increase your support for BN.

"There must be a sense of give and take in this country and the major ethnic groups must work together in one political union called BN. This is the winning formula."

Najib pledged to work with MCA, which had been a comrade of Umno even before independence was achieved.

"There should not be leadership struggles all the time and good working relations between the president and deputy president must be cultivated. We must focus on doing better in the next elections, while strengthening party unity."

He made it clear that MCA was vocal and was not a "silent partner" in BN, as painted by DAP. MCA, he added, played a pivotal role in BN and was an important representative of the Chinese community in

the country.

"MCA is not a silent partner of BN. They give their views courteously, but firmly. They speak out in cabinet meetings and BN meetings. The voice of the Chinese community is expressed through MCA."

He said despite adversities, BN's objectives remained clear. .

"I believe we have a clear road map for Malaysia. The opposition parties, their road map is hazy. You can have differences at the state level, but not at the federal level. BN isn't perfect, but we are far better than the alternative."