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'Don't insult Malay dignity'

UNITY: Umno has never been racist, says Najib

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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak greeting supporters at the new Umno building in Muar, Johor, yesterday. Pic by Syarafiq Abd Samad

UMNO has never been racist in any aspect of its policies and practices but this does not give a reason for the people to insult the dignity of the Malays.

"The blogs wrote today that (Umno) should stop playing the racial card. Umno has never played the racial card, but this does not give a reason for (the people) to insult the Malays. Do not hurt (*carik-carik*) the dignity of the Malays," said Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"It is unacceptable for people to insult the leadership of the Malays."

In this regard, Najib said the "Perhimpunan Melayu Bersatu" rally on Sept 16 was incorrectly described as having racial connotations.

"The Sept 16 rally was held peacefully. Who told them (traders) to close the shops? Nobody said that KL had to be deserted.

"There were no racist posters or posters of bloodied kris. There were no incidents of people stepping on a non-Malay leader's face (picture).

"The gathering was held to support the government," said Najib, addressing a crowd of 3,000, who included Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders and members, at the opening of the new Muar Umno division building in Jalan Meriam, here, yesterday.

Najib urged Umno members to uphold the spirit of the party's struggle, which has been its strength all these years.

"The strength of Umno lies in its members' ability to preserve the

spirit of the party's struggle.

"Let us not find fault but work together for the best interest of the party. We assume our positions to help in the party's struggles."

He said if Umno which was formed in 1946 slackened and failed to uphold its struggle for the race and religion, it would eventually become weak.

"The strength of the party is the fighting spirit of members and this is what I want to emphasise to strengthen and toughen the party.

"Umno was not born by the roadside, Umno was not born by the hillside but was founded at Johor Istana Besar in 1946," he said.

Najib also stressed that Umno would firmly uphold the concept of power sharing among the BN component parties as it would ensure the country's success in the future.

"The party still believes in having diversity in our country's adminis-

tration. It is about power sharing.

"The concept of power sharing, which benefits all races is still being upheld by Umno until today. We believe this concept will guarantee the country's future," he said.

On the new RM7 million Muar Umno building, which took 14 years to build, Najib said that it exemplified the party's struggle and its belief in the concept of power sharing.

"The Malays will always work together with non-Malays. In this building, the Umno division chief's room is next to the Barisan Nasional division committee's room."

Najib also touched on the big wins by pro-government group Pro-Aspirasi in the recent campus elections in public universities.

He said this was proof that Gen Y understands the struggle of the BN government.

He said it was the first time in

public universities' election history that the pro-government group won in all the seven campus elections held.

"Who says we don't cut it with Gen Y? They will support, on the condition we can show our struggle to them, make them understand what our policies stand for, the objectives of our struggle and the way we go about it," he said.

"If they (Gen Y) understand, they can accept that their future lies in us winning. Their existence at the universities is also because of us," said Najib.

Present were Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Idris Haron, Umno information chief Datuk Ahmad Maslan and Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department and Muar Umno division head Datuk Razali Ibrahim.