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'I am answerable to Umno members, not Dr M'

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LOYALTY: This is because the party's more than 3 million members decide my fate, says Najib

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said his position as Umno president should be determined by the party's more than three million members and not by others, including Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I am answerable to them (Umno members), as they are the ones who will decide my fate," he said when opening the Lumut Umno division delegates' meeting here yesterday.

The Umno president said the party's strength rested on the loyalty, commitment, love, dedication and sacrifice of its grassroots members.

He said Umno members had always remained loyal to the party, although most of them did not hold any post at the division, become a minister or secure a contract.

"Loyalty to party should last forever and not only when one has positions or has his or her wishes fulfilled," he said, adding that insincere members would leave the party when they could not get what they wanted.

Najib said the need to defend the party president was not because he was holding the post, but because it was the responsibility of party members to protect the institution.



Umno president **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** giving a speech at the opening of the **Lumut Umno division delegates' meeting** in Manjung, Perak, yesterday. Pic by **Muhaizan Yahya**

The Barisan Nasional chairman said when the Kuala Kangsar and Sungai Besar parliamentary by-elections were held, there were those who said the results should be a referendum on the people's dislike of the coalition and the prime minister.

"However, we managed to obtain a bigger majority of votes (in the by-elections) as the people are confident in the BN brand, even though the Kuala Kangsar candidate could not go out to campaign."

Najib questioned the sincerity of those, including Dr Mahathir, who accused him of not supporting Malays and claimed that he did not care about how the Malays felt when he was trying to secure Chinese

votes in 2013.

"But now, who is holding hands with (DAP adviser) Lim Kit Siang, while I am still with Umno?" he asked, alluding to Dr Mahathir's recent collaboration with the DAP veteran leader.

Najib reminded BN and Umno members in Perak not to forget the hardship that the people went through when the state was ruled by the opposition for 11 months after the 2008 general election.

"We must ensure that BN remains in power in the next general election as we have a good partnership between the state and federal governments."

He said Umno and BN must remain united and strong so that the

party and coalition did not face a fate similar to parties in other countries, such as Golkar Party (Indonesia), Liberal Democratic Party (Japan) and Congress Party (India).

He said Malaysia was not a failed or bankrupt state as its ranking in the World Economic Forum listings had significantly improved last year.

Earlier, Lumut Umno division chief and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Zambray Abd Kadir said the people should not be easily influenced by those who tried to bring down the country and its leaders.

He reminded Umno members to remain united and committed in defending the country and its leaders from attacks locally and abroad.

