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Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	28 AUGUST 2016

'Quarrelsome' ex-leader slammed

NST-28/8/2016

MACHIAVELLIAN:

He picks fights
with party leaders,
says Najib

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UMNO president Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday hit out at a former party leader whom he described as quarrelsome and would *cari gaduh* (pick a fight) with party leaders and others.

He said the leader, who had served the country for 22 years, had picked a fight with Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, Tun Hussein Onn, Tun Musa Hitam and Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi when he could not accept their decisions or opinions.

"And the latest, he said Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar was also wrong," he said at the Cameron Highlands Umno division delegates' meeting in Tanah Rata here yesterday.

Present were Pahang Umno liaison committee chairman and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob and Cameron Highlands Umno division chief Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail.

Although Najib did not mention the leader's name, it was in reference to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who came under fire from the sultan of Johor over his criticism of the "Bangsa Johor" concept.

Sultan Ibrahim was quoted as saying that Dr Mahathir's claim that the

concept could disunite the people reflected the former prime minister's "complete ignorance" of Johor's history.

Najib said Dr Mahathir had adopted Machiavellian and opportunistic politics when he embraced DAP leaders whom he had accused of being chauvinistic before.

The prime minister also said Malaysia was not a failed state and changes brought about by the Barisan Nasional government had improved people's lives.

As an analogy, he said the country was now at the top or in highlands due to the struggle of Umno and BN leaders and members.

He urged party members to work hard as a strong "vehicle" and "power" was required to reach a higher level.

He reminded party members to be loyal to the leadership as it would ensure that the party remained strong.

Najib said those who wanted to topple him should use the party election process and contest the top post, as the Umno president would normally become the prime minister.

The BN chairman also urged coalition members to work hard and serve people of all backgrounds, as their service mattered most compared with the negative reports produced by foreigners.

He announced a RM20.2 million allocation for the construction of Jalan Pos Betau-Pos Lenjang (RM15 million), a hawker centre in Tanah Rata (RM5 million) and upgrading works for Masjid Kampung Tanjung Gahai (RM200,000).

In **Kuantan**, Najib said Umno leaders must safeguard their political base to ensure the party remains strong.

He said they should reach out to their constituents and fulfil their needs as this would strengthen support for the party in the long term.

"Umno division chiefs should look after their divisions, the menteri besar should take care of the state and I will safeguard the nation.

"When we take care of our bases, we are taking care of the people," he said when opening the Paya Besar Umno divisional meeting in Gambang yesterday.

About 10,000 people, including Adnan and Umno division delegates, attended the event, which doubled up as a people's gathering.

Najib said it was not a difficult task to fulfil the needs of the people and that patience was paramount in dealing with the constituents.

He said the people would evaluate Umno and the government based on assistance provided to them.

At the event, Najib approved an allocation of RM4.5 million to build a new mosque in Felda Bukit Sagu.