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'Do not talk about secession'

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Najib: We will work and struggle together

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KOTA KINABALU: While the Federal Government is open to discussions about the rights of Sabah and Sarawak under the Malaysia Agreement, it will not entertain any secession move, said the Prime Minister.

"However you feel, don't talk about secession - no, no, no," said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to applause from delegates during the opening of the United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation - (Upko) convention in Penampang near here yesterday.

Adding that he had no intention of depriving both states of their rights as enshrined in the Malaysia Agreement, Najib said he was willing to hear any grouse or concern should there be any part that had been misinterpreted.

Likening Malaysia to a big family, Najib said there was bound to be disagreements among siblings and even between husband and wife.

"But whatever we do, we will work and struggle together to make this a better nation.

"We want Malaysia to be among the best," he said, adding this was the reason he had recently unveiled the National Transformation 50 agenda.

"Always keep in mind the big picture, the big dream," said Najib, urging Malaysians to always remain above petty issues.

"Let us not get stuck in problems of our own creation. Otherwise, other countries will leave us behind. The world is moving fast," he said.

"There will always be problems and challenges in any party, even in Umno. But always have the big picture in mind," he added.

The Prime Minister also reminded Barisan Nasional component parties that any decision on the allocation of Parliamentary and state



Keep big picture in mind: Najib officiating Upko's convention in Penampang. Looking on are (from left) Upko president Datuk Seri Madius Tangau, Malaysian ambassador to the Vatican Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman and Upko secretary-general Datuk Donald Mojuntin. — Bernama

assembly seats would be based on what was best for the ruling coalition.

"It's not a matter of the number of seats for each party. It's having the seats that each party can win," said Najib, warning the component parties not to underestimate the voters.

Malaysia, said Najib, would be deploying its naval vessels to repatriate the estimated 7,000 illegal Filipino immigrants from Sabah to their home country if the Philippines could not do so.

He said he was thankful that Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte had during their recent meeting in Kuala Lumpur agreed to accept the Filipinos who were arrested in Sabah.

The immigration detention centres in Sabah, he pointed out, were now full of foreigners held for immigration offences.

"If President Duterte had refused, there would have been little I could do," admitted Najib, adding that once the deportation starts,

Malaysian security forces could track down other illegal foreigners in Sabah.

The Federal Government, said Najib, was now more open to listening to people's grouses compared to the time under one of his predecessors.

"There are those who say we are undemocratic. But who is more undemocratic? Those who ordered hundreds of people to be sent to Kamunting?" he said in reference to the detention centre that once held those arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA), which had since been repealed.

Later, when opening the Liberal Democratic Party annual general meeting, Najib said any talk of secession was treason.

"My door is always open to talk about the needs of the states. Let us sit down and discuss. Sabah will get what is rightfully theirs but if you talk about leaving Malaysia, it is treason. Then, I can't even talk."