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Malays not united because of 'old leader', says Najib

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PETALING JAYA: The Malays in Malaysia are not united today because of an "old leader" who split them up into different parties, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The Prime Minister said this leader was to blame for causing the Malays to be divided into three separate parties during his administration.

"Now that he has retired, he has divided the Muslims further into five groups by forming another party.

"This leader has a habit of being quarrelsome, acting like a hypocrite, he slanders them one moment, but befriends them the next," Najib said in an audio recording of a speech posted on his blog on Friday.

The Prime Minister did not name the "old leader" but it is believed that he was referring to former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Najib said Muslims in this country were finding it difficult to unite because of this former leader's actions, blaming the latter for complicating efforts to achieve a united ummah.

"He has thrown many harsh words at me when he too was not spared from accusations, such as being called *kepala perompak* (chief of robbers) but everyone knows I am not the first person he has abused.

"Many others were victimised by him in the past but have been picked up (as allies) again for political reasons at certain times," Najib said.

The Prime Minister said all Muslims were considered brothers, and as such he had tried to befriend parties with majority Muslim members although they may disagree in terms of political ideology.

"A Muslim leader has the heavy responsibility of uniting the ummah. I strongly hold on to this principle as it is called for in the holy Quran.

"I humbly urge all of us to stop quarrelling.

"Let's go back to being united to form an ummah that is strong and successful," Najib added.