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MELAKA GATEWAY

PM: NO LOGIC IN OPPOSITION CLAIMS

Nation does not lose sovereignty due to foreign investments, says Najib

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NO foreign investment in the country has ever been or allowed to be made at the expense of the nation's sovereignty, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

Repudiating such allegations made by an opposition leader recently on the RM43-billion Melaka Gateway mega project, Najib called for logic in such claims on "ceding of sovereignty to China" to be assessed.

Chinese companies are the main investors in the 246ha mixed development, involving the construction of artificial islands along the state capital's coast.

"Don't listen to all this non-

sense from the opposition," Najib told more than 10,000 civil servants during their monthly gathering in Ayer Keroh, the first of his five stops in a day-long working visit to the state, yesterday.

He was accompanied by Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Idris Haron, State Assembly Speaker Datuk Othman Muhamad, Public Service Department director-general Datuk Seri Zainal Rahim Seman and Malacca State Secretary Datuk Seri Naim Abu Bakar.

"Sometimes, there is no logic in those claims. He (the opposition leader) attacked Melaka Gateway, stating that because of that project, we would lose our sovereignty. Since when has foreign investment caused us to lose sovereignty? This has never happened," said Najib.

Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had claimed that the Melaka Gateway project "was another sign of the Federal Government surrendering the nation's sovereignty" due to the freehold status of properties under the development.

Dr Mahathir had, earlier this



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak greeting civil servants during their monthly gathering in Ayer Keroh yesterday. PIC BY KHAIRUNISAH LOKMAN

year, lambasted the Forest City project in Johor, another major Chinese investment, and claimed that the country's sovereignty would be ceded to China.

Najib said such investments in infrastructure would benefit the people instead of posing threats to the nation's sovereignty.

"Investors build factories and ports in our country. This means the ports will be in our hands, controlled by us. We will not lose sovereignty. We will always defend our sovereignty," said Najib.

He also urged civil servants to push forward the government's agenda in implementing development plans for the people.

"The culture of creating divisions between us should be avoided. History has proved here

that disunity can cause the collapse of an empire.

"This is why I stress on the importance of delivery systems among civil servants to ensure that all big plans for the country become a reality."

Najib then headed for the launch of the state-of-the-art Social Security Organisation (Socso) Rehabilitation Centre, which was renamed Tun Abdul Razak Rehabilitation Centre (TARRC).

In another speech there, Najib took a swipe at the opposition's claim that Malaysia was allegedly a "failed" state, which ran contrary to the level of care and benefits for workers provided by the government.

Najib said such services proved

the country's capability in providing the best services to its people.

"This should effectively diminish false claims by certain quarters that Malaysia is a failed or bankrupt state. A bankrupt state would not be able to create such a world-class facility.

"This is another example, among others, that shows Malaysia is a country that has a bright future."

Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri Richard Riot Jaem earlier said TARRC, built at a cost of RM238 million, was equipped to rehabilitate 350 injured workers simultaneously.

It has won several international awards and is recognised as the best facility in Southeast Asia.

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