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Listen to rakyat, govt staff told

PM: Engage more with the people to better serve them

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PETALING JAYA: Cut the red tape, listen to what the rakyat have to say and don't lecture them. This is the Prime Minister's reminder to civil servants.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said they should go to the ground to engage with the people to hear their problems.

They should not be organising ceremonies where the guest of honour only interacts with top officials in attendance while the people have no chance to speak to them, according to him.

“When I go to the ground, to a village, I want to talk to the locals. I don't want to talk to those in the top echelons of the civil service because I already know them.”

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak

“Listen to the people and you'll be surprised that even kampung folk can tell you a thing or two that's worth noting and which can improve their lives,” Najib said.

He was speaking at a dialogue session at a ceremony to mark the 5th anniversary of Genovasi Malaysia, which was formed to equip youths with an innovative mindset.

Najib said his own events with the people used to be held in a way that left him no chance to interact meaningfully with his audience.

“At a ceremony, I give a speech and then I sit down to have tea, surrounded by top officials.



Changing mindsets: Najib looking at an exhibit during a ceremony to mark the 5th anniversary of Genovasi Malaysia in Petaling Jaya. With him is Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri.

“When I go to the ground, to a village, I want to talk to the locals.

“I don't want to talk to those in the top echelons of the civil service because I already know them,” he said.

The Prime Minister said he insisted on dispensing with protocol during his events, which has led to positive results.

Citing an example, Najib said he was in Pulau Tuba, off Langkawi, recently to launch a government project.

“I sat down with the village heads and in the course of the conversation, I discovered that the price of RON95 petrol and diesel on that island was substantially higher than on Langkawi island.

“If I hadn't sat down with them I would not have known about this,” said Najib, adding that he then instructed the minister in charge of the matter to ensure that fuel in Pulau Tuba is sold at the same price as in Langkawi.

In his remarks at an earlier panel discussion, Najib said his approach as Prime Minister, among others, is to offer Malaysians hope for the future.

“You can move people by doing two things, either the politics of fear that was done during the Nazi period in Germany, or you take the line of giving them hope,” he added.

Later, during his speech, Najib said the Government is thinking about raising the number of civil

servants sent for the Design Thinking Innovation Ambassador programme each year at Genovasi Malaysia.

He said more than 4,000 civil servants have taken part in the programme which is effective in sparking off innovative ideas to improve efficiency and productivity in the Government.

“We need to deliver more and better services so that the rakyat will know the Government is here to serve them,” he said.

Watch the video
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