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PM: MALAYSIA WARY OF GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES

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But the nation's economic growth is encouraging, says Najib

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MALAYSIA faces new challenges in the form of geopolitical risks.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said as such, decisions and measures taken were in accordance with the country's interests and the challenges it faced.

"We are aware of the more serious issues, such as geopolitical risks following the crisis involving the Gulf states, ballistic threats by North Korea and even the United Kingdom's parliamentary results," he said after chairing the Umno Supreme Council meeting here yesterday.

But, Najib said, the world was experiencing positive economic growth and Malaysia also recorded an encouraging economic performance in the first quarter of this year, 5.6 per cent growth compared with 4.1 per cent in the corresponding period last year.



Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak chairing the Umno Supreme Council meeting in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY EIZAIRI SHAMSUDIN

On the Pujut by-election, he said the Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate for the poll would be decided soon.

He said the matter would be discussed with Sarawak Chief Minister Datuk Amar Abang Johari Abang Openg.

"The preparation is going well and it (the decision) is more in Sarawak BN's hands. We will help however we can."

On May 19, the Election Commission announced July 4 as the polling date for the Pujut by-election, while the nomination of candidates will be on June 20.

A by-election was called for the state seat, which is in the Miri parliamentary constituency, af-

ter its incumbent, Dr Ting Tiong Choon, was removed from the state assembly.

On May 12, Sarawak International Trade and E-Commerce Minister Datuk Seri Wong Soon Koh tabled a motion to disqualify Dr Ting over claims that the latter had Australian citizenship.

On Umno, Najib said the party had received almost 30,000 new members in the last two months.

"The total is 29,845 new members in just these two months."

"What's more surprising was that we have been receiving at least 300 new members daily, who came to our headquarters

here to register."

Najib gave away prizes to 17 winners of a lucky draw held in conjunction with UMNO's 71st anniversary celebration at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil here on May 11.

Kuala Terengganu Umno member Saifuldhari Abu Bakar took home the grand prize, a 2.4L Proton Perdana.

Najib also broke fast with Umno Supreme Council members, veteran leaders and BN component party leaders.

He was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.