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'Leaders should support successors'

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Najib: Each PM must steer country to greater heights

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PEKAN: As a leader, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said he must add value to the achievements of his predecessors because building a country takes time.

He said each prime minister must be able to bring the country to greater heights in his leadership process but when his time is up, he should support his successors.

"When Pak Lah handed the reins to me, he told me to do better than him. He said to take this country to the next level. Pak Lah's heart was sincere even though he was stepping down.

"He is a statesman whom I greatly respect. He did not think of his self-interest but rather the country first.

"One day, I shall tell my successor to do the same thing," Najib said in his winding up speech at the Pekan

Umno division delegates meeting here yesterday.

He added that building a country takes time and it requires multiple generations and leaders.

"Thus when a leader's duty is over, he should support his successor. I still remember the words of the man who was our prime minister for 22 years. He said this many times even though he seemed to have forgotten or he purposely forgot.

"He reminded Umno members that when a leader retires, he must support his successor because his success came from the support of other people. Unfortunately, he didn't heed his own advice," said Najib, obviously referring to Pakatan Harapan chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Najib, who is the Pekan Umno chief, said he was only strong because he had the backing of the party.

"But if we take the attitude of

trying to bury the party, the ones who will lose out are our children and grandchildren who are depending on our protection," he said.

In his opening speech, Najib said he was satisfied with Umno's preparations for the general election but there was still room for improvement.

He said even though the party was optimistic of winning in the elections, it must hold on to three concepts to be truly successful.

"We must have soul in our struggles. Don't you run away and form a new party if you didn't get a post or suffer losses in elections. Or be like that person who held on to the top post for 22 years and was all too willing to betray the party.

"These people have no soul in their struggles. To have soul is to believe in the party's cause for the Malays, Islam, other races and the country. Parties formed out of anger and disappointment cannot



Up close and personal: Najib waving cheerfully to supporters during the Pekan Umno division delegates meeting in Pekan. — Bernama

last," Najib said.

He said the second concept was unity where every member had a role to play in ensuring victory, including working with other Barisan component parties.

"The third is loyalty. As long as leaders do not order us to do things that are wrong, we must stay loyal to them. Hold on to these three concepts and we will be successful," he said.