

## **Najib warns Umno against offensive speeches at upcoming assembly**

**The Malaysian Insider**

**November 26, 2011**

**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 26 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak told Umno delegates today not to be offensive in their speeches during next week's assembly, saying the party must portray itself as conscientious and "willing to change".

"Our delegates, in their speeches, must not offend the feelings of others. Use proper language and be aware that they are not only speaking to the 3,000 delegates inside the hall, but the 28 million Malaysians outside who will also be listening," he told national news agency Bernama in an interview today.

The Umno president said it was imperative that Umno portrays itself as a reformist party that is willing to change for the people, in line with his 1 Malaysia "people first" tagline.

"If we remember these two words, Umno will gain full support again," he said, according to the full transcript of the interview on Bernama Online.

Umno will hold its annual general assembly next week and is expected to focus on preparation for the coming polls, which is expected soon.

The Najib administration appears to have launched its offensive over recent months, exhausting every strategy in its political playbook in a game to best its Pakatan Rakyat (PR) foes ahead of the election.

Most significantly, the prime minister has also moved into PR's "middle Malaysia" fortress by doling out promises of reform and greater civil freedom, intent on wooing support from the federal opposition's key vote bank.

In his interview today, Najib (picture) also reminded delegates of Barisan Nasional's (BN) dismal showing in Election 2008 when it lost five states to PR, saying it was a lesson that "should never be forgotten".

Stressing on the importance of fielding "winnable candidates" for the polls, Najib said Umno members must be willing to sacrifice for the good of the country and to ensure BN stays in power.

"By right, what happened in the 2008 general election when we lost five states is a lesson that should never be forgotten. And we must realise the consequences of that loss.

"I am not denying that sometimes we cannot please all our supporters at the divisional level.. that is why I said earlier it is impossible for us to satisfy 100 per cent of the members in a division as even at the divisional level, they do not share the same views.

"[But] What we must have is party discipline and loyalty to the party. Meaning, when it is time to make the decision (candidate selection), it is accepted, supported and defended by each member of the party," he said.

Najib also demanded party members to change according to the shifting political landscape

and not be overly entrenched in the old ways or risk being rejected by the electorate.

“We must embrace changes in this political landscape and be brave to make those changes.... I have said before, if we cannot change, we will be changed,” he said.

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