

Help give correct info on nation, PM tells retirees
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SHAH ALAM: Retired civil servants and former elected representatives must act as the government's spokesmen and spread the right information about the country's political and economic transformation to the community.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said this was to ensure that a strong government could be formed come the next general election.

"When you gather to chat, try to defend the government, be our spokesperson and our lawyer.

"If you say that we (the government) have made mistakes, I can accept that. We are not perfect. We have weaknesses but I'm sure we are far better than the other side," he told some 800 retired government officers and former elected representatives here yesterday.

Najib, who is also Umno president, assured the retirees that he was committed in continuing the struggles started by the party's founders, including strengthening the Bumiputera agenda.

"The basis of our main struggles has never changed. Our goals remain the same but the approach and policies have to be adjusted."

Najib admitted that the Bumiputera agenda in the past had weaknesses in its implementation.

He said no one should be blamed as the circumstances were brought about by the financial crisis.

He added that the government could not allow big companies to go under during the crisis.

However, this time, Najib said only those qualified based on their track record and merit would be helped.

"We cannot place our hopes on one or two individuals. We must give it to those who are qualified based on merit and not acquaintance."

In order to become a developed nation, Najib said the rent-seeking mentality of asking for endorsement from ministers must be changed.

"It is no use asking for the prime minister's and other ministers' signatures for endorsement if we do not develop the Bumiputera capacity.

"This is what was wrong (in the past), the policy was correct but the implementation wasn't.

"We have learnt and we will carry out a more transparent and objective assessment."

Speaking at another meet-the-people session at SMK Putra Perdana Padang in Puchong, Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional chairman, said all BN component party leaders in Selangor must forge a greater unity to win back Selangor.

"If we want to win in Selangor, those in the grassroots and those at the top must be united.

"All should be faithful to the party president and not mind even if one was not chosen as a candidate."

Najib was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, and Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar at the function of some 20,000 people.

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