

**Umno is inclusive, not extreme, Najib insists**  
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**By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 5 — Umno has always been inclusive towards other races and is never extreme, Datuk Seri Najib Razak has insisted.

The Umno president said proof of Umno's inclusiveness was its ability to work well with Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties like the MCA and MIC for decades.

"Umno has never been an extreme party since the beginning; we are tolerant and inclusive towards other races. That is why we have been successful for the past 12 elections," Najib (picture) told Umno Online in an interview.

The full transcript of the interview was made available on Bernama Online.

"Our ties are based on BN's philosophy and practice. We are well-suited with one another in the BN. We are a coalition centred on reality and actuality," he said.

In contrast, Najib said Pakatan Rakyat (PR) was unable to even form a shadow Cabinet despite all its talk of wanting an effective two-party system in the country.

"In making evaluations, the voters should realise that what they need to take into account is not about who should be in Putrajaya but who is actually able to take our country, to lead our country in the next five years, and be able to bring in more benefits to our country," the prime minister added.

Najib also said that Umno was a "blessed party" for Malays, and that its members should not be insulted by that fact.

"We shouldn't feel insulted; we shouldn't feel pressured because everything enjoyed by the country today is in fact a result of Umno's deeds, and those of Umno leaders, big or small over the years."

This is not the first time Najib has come to Umno's defence. Last year, the PM said in his speech at the party's general assembly that Umno was responsible for the country's current "social stability."

The Umno president said the Malay party had willingly co-operated with the MCA and MIC for a "bigger purpose" back in the 1950s to form a government and gain independence.

"It has been proven from a long time back, Umno is not a racist organisation.

"Umno is in reality a catalyst of the co-operative spirit between races which finally created social stability and brought about national harmony," Najib said in his presidential address at the Umno general assembly on December 1 last year.

BN suffered its worst polls performance when it lost five states to PR back in 2008, under the leadership for then-Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

After taking over in 2009, Najib set about making a slew of reform pledges, including liberalisation of the economy as well as a repeal of draconian laws such as the Internal Security Act (ISA), and even set up a bipartisan parliamentary committee to look into electoral reforms in Malaysia.

But groups such as Bersih have remained unconvinced of PM Najib's polls reform pledges and took their dissatisfaction to the streets last weekend, barely a year since its last street rally on July 9.

Najib is expected to call for elections as soon as this June after months of delivering one-off aid payments throughout the country as well as having unveiled his administration's minimum wage policy last week.

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