

Umno's Struggle Has Benefited All Malaysians, Says PM
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 10 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib said Umno's struggle all this while had benefited all Malaysians regardless of race, religion or ideology.

He said Umno, which was formed 66 years ago and for 55 years been the backbone of the Barisan Nasional (BN), together with its partners in the Alliance and the BN, "had saved democracy from the clutches of communist dictatorship and became the midwife to the formation of Malaysia".

"It also brought development to rural areas, launched a war against poverty and illiteracy and undertook social engineering which saw the emergence a huge middle class.

In addition, implementing land reforms through Felda, embarking on large investments in education and basic infrastructure and transforming the country's status from a low-income agricultural country to a middle-income industrial nation, he said.

Najib, who is also Umno president, said this in his message in conjunction Umno's 66th anniversary celebration tomorrow which was carried by www.umno-online.com here Thursday night.

The prime minister said Umno was truly a mass movement that was nationalistic and democratic, and its uniqueness was that it was a party that was constantly in touch with the pulse of the people and their aspirations.

"Wild accusations by some that Umno is a racist party, is anti-democracy or is elitist are entirely untrue," he said.

Najib said, however, the success achieved by the party should not make "us forget the need to continue to uplift the spirit underlying the formation of Umno, which was to elevate race, religion and the beloved land".

"Time passes, the environment changes and the post-Independence challenges will obviously not be the same as pre-independence and in the early years of Independence but above all, it is for religion, race and nation," stressed Najib. The Umno president added: "We do not want the basic spirit of Umno's core strengths to be relegated to history to be remembered and be nostalgic about."

"Today, Umno has a heavy responsibility to ensure not only strong mass support for the National Transformation Policy together with all its components towards realising Vision 2020, but also to ensure that all Malaysians, especially Malays and other Bumiputeras receive fair and equal opportunities to make it happen," he said.

He also said this was the time for Umno members to strengthen the party in order to ensure the future of the Malays and the nation and that this struggle could not stop.

"Umno members must ensure the success of the party, especially in facing the upcoming 13th General Election. Let us together resolve to renew our determination to continue to strive for a Malaysia that is more progressive and and prosperous," he added.

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