

**Najib: I cannot afford one wrong decision**  
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**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 10 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak related today the responsibilities he shoulders as prime minister, saying his administration could not even afford a single mistake as it would be used as fodder to dispute his leadership.

Najib, who had taken on the country's reins at a time when the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) was said to be at its weakest, said the "stress factor" in being prime minister soars when he has to make major decisions and ensure that they satisfy all, if not most, segments of society.

"When you are PM, if we have to make 10 major decisions, we need to get 10 out of 10 right. If we only get nine right, and one inaccurate, that is the one that people would fault us for.

"And that would be the issue that questions our leadership," Najib said this morning in an interview on Sinar.FM, a favourite Malay-language radio station among listeners.

The first-term prime minister is likely to call for elections soon, riding on the feel-good factor arising from his administration's slew of reforms and handouts to voters.

BN sources have also said that last month's rally for free and fair elections by election watchdog Bersih had not affected its support despite negative reports in the foreign media, and an election could be called as soon as July.

Bersih's first rally in 2007 had been largely credited for the staggering losses that BN had suffered in the tsunami of Election 2008, said to be the ruling pact's worst showing to date.

Opposition parties, upon trouncing BN in four states and one federal territory and retaining its hold over Kelantan, has since grown in strength under the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) pact and is expected to give BN a run for its money in the next polls.

As such, the coming 13th general election is expected to be a referendum on BN's half-a-century chokehold on federal power and Najib's performance today is crucial in determining the pact's survival.

The prime minister appeared to acknowledge the burden he shoulders during his radio interview, pointing to the differences he had felt in the increase in his responsibilities after assuming the post in 2009.

"The stress factor (in being PM) is because we know that our decision, whatever it is, firstly, it is for the good of the people, but it also means that we are the ones who make the final decision.

"So we have to fulfil that responsibility of making that decision and hope that it brings benefit and satisfies the people and the country.

"But if we make wrong judgments... that is the stress factor... because the decisions that we make must be accurate," Najib said on Sinar.FM.

The prime minister was later questioned by a listener one of his government's controversial decisions — the plan to list FELDA Global Ventures Holdings (FGVH) on the Malaysian stock exchange — a move that the opposition has been using to criticise his leadership.

But Najib repeated his assurance that the listing plan, expected to take place next month, would only bring benefits to FELDA settlers nationwide.

He explained that the exercise would not affect the settlers' land as alleged by critics of the proposed plan, saying that their land titles would be maintained and on top of that, each family would be receiving a "windfall" of RM15,000, as announced on Tuesday.

"We are not taking their land, their land titles will be maintained. We will only take land that we use for plantations... which have no settlers.

"So it is untrue that we are taking settlers' land, we maintain their rights and now we are giving windfall of RM5,000 to the settlers, RM5,000 to their spouses and RM5,000 to their children," he told the caller, Khairul, from Johor Baru.

On Tuesday, Najib announced a RM1,689,525,000 windfall for all FELDA settlers and staff throughout the country, ahead of FGVH's listing and an expected general election.

The prime minister said that all FELDA settlers would receive a windfall of RM15,000 each through three different phases — RM5,000 for settlers (phase 1), RM5,000 for their wives (phase 2) and RM5,000 for the second-generation settlers (phase 3).

Critics of the coming FGVH initial public offering (IPO) have argued that the move was merely a ploy by the government to fill the ruling Umno's election war chest ahead of polls expected soon.

Opposition leaders have also turned their noses up at the RM1.69 billion in "windfall" promised to settlers, claiming the amount was merely 30 per cent of the total RM5.6 billion the settlers are entitled to.

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