

Bold ideas needed

09 July, 2012

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By ALANG BENDAHARA AND SEAN AUGUSTIN

RISING EXPECTATIONS: Civil servants must rise to the challenge, says Najib

PUTRAJAYA: MALAYSIANS are now more critical and demand not only quantity but speedy government service.

Therefore, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak urged civil servants to rise to the challenge, change and come up with bold ideas.

"The country's excellent education system has changed expectations of Malaysians.

"These high hopes have made the job of civil servants more challenging than before.

"Thus, as a government, we have no option but to ramp up our capabilities for a more effective and speedier delivery system as well as make sure the service is delivered to the right focus group."

Najib said this in his opening speech at a dialogue with civil servants at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre here yesterday.

Thousands of civil servants from federal, state and local governments attended the dialogue. Present were Deputy Prime Minister

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ali Hamsa.

Najib emphasised an important feature of the 21st century, that those who won the contest of ideas, would succeed.

He reminded civil servants that the nation faced stiff competition regionally and globally for resources, investments, technology and talent.

Najib hailed the dialogue as a process of engagement that would build esprit de corps among the civil servants.

He said it gave him and Muhyiddin a chance to listen to suggestions and ideas that could be used to recalibrate, fine-tune and review everything needed to achieve the country's objectives.

"We acknowledge the civil servants' role as the backbone of achieving the country's aims.

"We depend on you. You are the ones who will make it happen.

"That is why we need your firm and strong commitment. In the past three years, we have shown an encouraging performance and I hope the journey will bring us greater success."

Najib said he was proud that collaboration and ideas by civil servants and ministers had produced several achievements, such as the Urban Transformation Centre (UTC), the first of which was launched in Malacca last month.

The UTC places 72 federal and state departments and agencies under one roof for the public's convenience. The one in Malacca took just six months to build.

"There is still bigger room for improvement.

"In fact, I want to see that the improvements are not just incremental, but by a quantum leap."

Najib urged civil servants to continue to think beyond their "silo" compartments and come up with improvements under the National Blue Ocean Strategy.

He cited the collaboration between the army and police in combating crime as an example.

"We must understand that we are living in a society that is in transition. Maybe many of us are not aware and only see within our own boundaries. Malaysian society is very complex and challenging. There are huge regional differences between here and in places like Sabah and Sarawak. Thus, the management of the country requires us to look at it from all angles and to be as creative as possible."

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Source: <http://www.nst.com.my/top-news/bold-ideas-needed-1.105155#>