

Najib: 'Bodek PM' days are over
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, July 19 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak told government pensioners today not to support him blindly but to judge him by his track record, adding that he did not want to entertain sycophants because the "bodek PM days" were now over.

The prime minister pointed out that government pensioners need not fear him now as they no longer served the government, and he could not offer them promotions or transfer them to cushy posts.

The only thing he could offer the group, Najib (picture) said, was higher pensions.

"So I do not want you to support me simply because you want to support me or because I am the prime minister so you want to put me on a pedestal.

"If you say you want to 'bodek' the PM, the 'zaman bodek PM' has ended," he thundered to a crowd of over 1,000 government pensioners at the launch of the 1 Malaysia Government Pensioners Club (KUPEKMAS) at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Najib said support must only be given if pensioners feel that the present administration is deserving of such support and respect.

"Not because of anything else... not because you fear the PM. You don't need to be afraid, I cannot transfer you any more... you no longer need to fear me, but you respect me and that is why you support me," he said.

There are an estimated 500,000 government pensioners in the country and a 1.4-million strong civil service.

Critics from the federal opposition have often condemned government leaders for allegedly abusing the country's civil service, long viewed as a key vote bank for the ruling BN pact.

But Najib said today that the criteria for such support should be on how well the present government has looked after the welfare of Malaysians and the civil servants.

"If your answer is: Yes, your leaders of the past and today have truly protected your welfare and fate, then we are qualified to receive your undivided support," he said.

He extolled his government's plans for Malaysia, saying it would lead to the prosperity of the country and its people and were not mere "fantasies".

Likely referring to the opposition, Najib urged the crowd not to be fooled by sweet promises made only for the sake of realising a dream to capture Putrajaya.

"So bring this message back to where you came from. You know my track record as the PM. Where I can help, I will help," he said.

Later, Najib announced July 19 as "Pensioner's Day", an idea mooted earlier by Cuepacs president Datuk Omar Osman during his speech.

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