

Najib Raps Opposition's Parliamentary Committee Plans On Petronas
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 2 (Bernama) -- The opposition's pledge to set up a parliamentary select committee on Petronas may result in the national oil company losing its independence and flexibility in undertaking its operations.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the opposition's position on this matter was contrary to the interest of Petronas.

What was pledged, he argued, was the opposite to the confidence and trust shown by the present Barisan Nasional (BN) government in the oil giant which operated out of the iconic Petronas Twin Towers.

"The promise is outlined in their manifesto. In other words, members of parliament can summon Petronas or its president to appear (before the committee), giving them instructions.

"...What will happen to Petronas' independence and flexibility?," Najib asked Petronas staff at a town hall-like gathering here Tuesday.

The prime minister pointed out that the current BN government gave ample room for Petronas to make decisions.

Citing an example, Najib, who is also finance minister, said that a few 'big tenders' related to Petronas were referred to the Treasury, a few months ago.

"But I said, 'No', why should I decide? Let the board (of Petronas) decide. So, it has gone back to Petronas.

"I don't make the final decision. I trust the board...let them decide. I don't want to make decisions over big tenders," he added, on the type of relations between the government and the company.

In the manifesto outlined for the upcoming 13th General Election, the opposition, among others, planned to introduce a system of parliamentary select committee for key areas such as finance, security, education, defence, Petronas and others.

This, it claimed, was to enhance the effectiveness of arbitration function held by Parliament.

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