

**Najib Optimistic Harimau Muda A Capable Of Winning 'Pestabola Merdeka'
Bernama
7 Sept, 2013**

KUANTAN, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak is optimistic that the Harimau Muda A squad is capable of emerging as the champion of the Pestabola Merdeka 2013 tournament beginning Saturday until Sept 14 at the Stadium Darul Makmur, here.

The squad coached by Ong Kim Swee was given this inspiration when Najib visited the team before the kick-off for the opening match for the tournament against Singapore this afternoon at the Stadium Darul Makmur.

The Prime Minister spent about 15 minutes chatting with the Harimau Muda players.

Najib expressed confidence that the squad handled by Kim Swee had a good chance of defending the gold medal at the SEA Games in Myanmar in December.

"Of course we want to become the champion but our main target is to retain the gold medal at the Myanmar SEA Games," he told reporters at Stadium Darul Makmur.

The Harimau Muda squad is scheduled to face Myanmar on Monday before meeting Thailand on Wednesday.

For the record, the senior national squad won the championship nine times, that is, in 1958, 1959, 1960, 1968, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1986 and 1993.

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v7/newsindex.php?id=976001>