

**Najib, Rosmah Lift Spirit of Malaysian Thomas Cup Team**  
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ASTANA (KAZAKHSTAN), May 24 (Bernama) -- Despite the tight schedule here, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak and his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor still had time to give words of inspiration to the Malaysian Thomas Cup squad who will be facing Japan in the final in New Delhi on Sunday.

The words of encouragement were conveyed through national singles champion Datuk Lee Chong Wei via a telephone conversation from Astana, and the Prime Minister believed that the Malaysian players would be competing with strong determination to succeed.

"By coincidence, each time he plays before or after the game, Datuk Lee Chong Wei will call my wife on the phone as patron of the Badminton Association of Malaysia.

"So during this visit, he had called twice and my wife and I have given words of inspiration to the Malaysian squad through Chong Wei," he told Malaysian journalists.

Najib, who is on a three-day official visit to Kazakhstan since Thursday, appeared very happy on the achievement of the Malaysian team in the Thomas Cup this time, which saw Malaysia ending a 12-year wait to play in the final to lift the prestigious trophy.

"The news that Malaysia qualified for the Thomas Cup final match is a most welcome news and our team realise that they carry the aspiration of almost 30 million Malaysians to lift the Thomas Cup.

"This represents a success that will certainly lift the spirits of the Malaysian people and the image of Malaysia, and I believe our team will play with full determination to achieve victory which will become a memorable event for Malaysians," he said.

Malaysia ended a 12-year wait to qualify for the final of the Thomas Cup after beating Indonesia 3-0 in the semi-finals at the Siri Fort Indoor Stadium in New Delhi on Friday night.

The national squad had surpassed the target of qualifying for the semifinals in the current edition of the cup and has an opportunity to end a 22-year drought to lift the prestigious trophy which Malaysia had last won in Kuala Lumpur in 1991.

Malaysia will face newcomer Japan in the final on Sunday.

Malaysia last played in the final in the 2002 edition in Guangzhou, China, where the team lost 2-3 to Indonesia.

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