

**Civil Servants Involved In Helping In Disasters Are Unsung Heroes - PM
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PUTRAJAYA, June 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak regards civil servants, who put their lives on the line in rescue and relief operations in disasters afflicting the nation, as unsung heroes.

He took the opportunity in his speech, at the 14th Premier Public Service Ceremony (MAPPA X1V), here, today to record his appreciation to civil servants who were involved during the big floods at the end of last year, and the earthquake in Sabah recently. "Many civil servants were involved, including from the military, police, Fire and Rescue Department, Rela (People's Volunteer Corps, and doctors and others.

"These are the committed civil servants who are indeed commendable. They, and not only the mountain guides, are also unsung heroes behind the scenes, who should be appreciated," he said to thunderous applause from those present.

Also present at the event held at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC), were Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Cabinet ministers and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa.

Najib shared with the audience his experience aboard a helicopter which showed the high commitment of the civil servants involved.

"I know, as I often travel in a helicopter; not easy to pilot a helicopter to a height of 10,000 feet, to land in a cross-wind, foggy weather...it is definitely putting your life at stake," he said.

Najib said in order for the civil service to step boldly forward and face challenges and crises, three actions must be initiated and bolstered.

Firstly, he said, civil servants could not operate on a "business as usual" mode, but should invoke a mental change and look at better implementation methods.

"I also do not want us to move in our respective silos. We must have across- ministry cooperation. We don't want boundary management, 'this is your turf, this is my turf. You don't come to my turf or I will shout at you'," he said.

Najib said civil servants should also improve their efficiency and do multi-tasking.

He also wants civil servants to make early preparations so that the 11th Malaysia Plan could be implemented by Jan 1, 2016.

"I don't want come next year, (we) wait for July before we implement. This is the final surge before we arrive at the threshold of a developed nation, so we must make an early

implementation plan," he said.

During the event, Najib also shared the story of the success of the public service transformation to date, for the ease and comfort of the people.

He said, among them, the business of processing passports by the Malaysian Immigration Department which had been cut down to only one hour from three months, and the setting up of the 1Malaysia One Call Centre as a one-stop call centre operating for 24 hours, Urban Transformation Centres (UTCs) and Rural Transformation Centres (RTC) which offered services to the public, were achievements to be proud of.

Najib also shared the achievements of the Sarawak General Hospital's Heart Centre which has been able to reduce the cost to a minimum RM5 to see a heart specialist and RM3 for a night in the ward.

"Patients undergoing open heart surgery pay only RM500 compared to private hospitals which may charge up to tens of thousands of ringgit," he said.

According to Najib, these success stories were the outcome of the efforts and commitment of civil servants who tirelessly endeavoured to boost the quality of services delivered to the people.

Recalling the government's move in improving the welfare of civil servants, Najib said among the initiatives were raising their salaries by between seven and 13 per cent in 2012 and raising the minimum pension to RM820 from RM720 for those who had served 25 years or more on Jan 1, 2010.

Other improvements were launching the 1Malaysia Public Servants Housing Scheme with the target of building 100,000 affordable homes nationwide by 2018 and providing housing loans of up to RM6 billion a year for civil servants in 2013.

"All these prove the government's endeavour to continue looking after the welfare of civil servants within the nation's financial capacity.

"It is not only aimed at looking after the interest and welfare of the civil servants but also to spur civil servants at all levels to continue delivering the best for the well-being of the people and nation," he said.

Najib said he always went down to the ground to listen to the views, suggestions and memorandums issued by civil servants at various levels, including the management, implementers and unionised workers over welfare matters, especially the issue of cost of living and housing for civil servants.

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