

**Najib Questions Dr M's Motivation Over Claims Against Him, Government
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 27 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said much of what had been stated recently by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad lacked objectivity and was downright wrong.

He said the question that should be asked was what was Dr Mahathir's motivation in choosing this moment to regurgitate smears manufactured by the very opposition groups that he previously denounced as liars.

Najib pointed out that Dr Mahathir often claimed that he was doing something because of what people told him when they came to see him.

"However, he should check whether such hearsay and claims have any evidence and truth before airing them. He knows well that many allegations were made about what happened under his administration.

"And always Tun's answer was: 'Where is the proof?'. He should be applying the same test to what he hears," Najib said in his blog, NajibRazak.com.

Najib's latest response to Dr Mahathir's allegations that touched on a number of issues as well as criticism against the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was uploaded to the 'frequently-asked-questions' section of the blogsite.

Najib said although much had been achieved in the first six years of his administration, all of the progress that Malaysia and the Barisan Nasional (BN) had made were being ignored in favour of baseless allegations and lies started by the opposition.

The prime minister pointed out that Dr Mahathir, during his 22 years in power, had always insisted on party members supporting the leadership, especially during challenging times.

"We did our part then, and I supported him through thick and thin. I did so because I believed then, as I do now, that party unity is a prerequisite for what we want to achieve for the country," he said.

The vast majority of UMNO members, he said, still recognised that real loyalty meant working together to build the party for the good of the rakyat (people).

"It is wrong for Tun and any UMNO members to undermine today's party leadership just because their personal wishes are not met," Najib contended, noting that the interests of the people and the party were far more important than any one individual.

The prime minister drove home the point that he was democratically elected by both the party and the people, and, as he had the mandate, would complete his term as party

president and prime minister.

"My priority is to ensure that we achieve Vision 2020 and the economic, governmental and political transformation that will benefit all Malaysians," he said, alluding to the goal of Malaysia attaining advanced nation status by that year.

The prime minister took the opportunity to shed light on a number of issues as he described as "unfair or misleading" many of the criticisms spewed by Dr Mahathir.

Citing the case of GST, Najib said: "He (Dr Mahathir) was opposed to the implementation of GST, although all credible economists believe that our tax base is the right thing to do.

"The revenue will be used for the welfare of the rakyat (people). Indeed, the idea was first mooted during his administration."

Najib further said that Dr Mahathir had echoed malicious opposition rumours concerning his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor and family, including the one concerning an expensive ring.

"It is a lie, and the company that owned the ring clarified in detail...that such a ring was never bought by Rosmah. It is regrettable that someone of Tun's stature should pass on such slander to the people," he said

Najib said Dr Mahathir also echoed the opposition in raising the purchase of the replacement government jet, claiming that the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong does not use the jet, calling him a liar.

"But again this is false - His Majesty was in fact the first VIP passenger to use the newly arrived aircraft for a trip to Langkawi, and will continue to do so," he explained.

Despite the brickbats hurled, Najib said he accepted criticisms with an open mind and would continue to address legitimate concerns and feedback.

"We must also always respect our elders who have done a lot for Malaysia. However, I know many believe that it's time they let the next generation run the country, and this includes overcoming problems and challenges on our own," he said.

Underscoring that Malaysia was a democracy, Najib said he was elected by UMNO, and by the people of this country, to lead them.

"Therefore, I have their mandate and I'm answerable to the party and the people, not to any one individual," the prime minister said.

At the next general election and party election, the party and the rakyat could exercise their democratic rights through the ballot box, he added.

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