

**Umno Needs More 'Keyboard Warriors' To Combat Negative Perception – Najib
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JOHOR BAHRU, Aug 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said UMNO needs to create more "keyboard warriors" to fend off negative perceptions against the party in the social media.

Najib, who is also UMNO president, said the matter is essential as how society thought was influenced more on perception rather than reality.

"The worsening dissemination of slander shows cyber space is the new battlefield compared to the physical world," said the prime minister.

Najib said UMNO is now facing severe challenges because the opposition knows how to manipulate the new media.

"The opposition does not need to do much. They merely need to create the perception of doubts and issues. There is no need to deliver anything.

"They only need to raise issues in the minds of the people which would be enough to erode their belief in the party," he said when opening Pasir Gudang UMNO delegates meeting here today.

Taking as an example the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) issue, where allegations were flying in cyber space that the sovereign wealth fund suffered losses of RM42 billion and had RM16 billion assets that had become worthless, the Prime Minister stressed that the facts were otherwise, but had been twisted around on social media so much so it had caused negative perceptions on 1MDB.

"If the assets are worthless, why would there be offers in the billions to buy Edra (1MDB's power generation arm), land parcels at Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) and Bandar Malaysia.

"I can say in the next five months, 1MDB's debts will be reduced significantly. I or 1MDB will be making the announcements on this in stages," said Najib, who is also Finance Minister.

Najib also took to task some UMNO members who were easily swayed by the negative perceptions hurled in social media and forgetting all the good initiatives undertaken by the Barisan Nasional (BN) government which had benefited the people greatly.

"Malaysia Airlines (before) was running at a loss, we injected RM6 billion, but I don't need to elaborate. Before there was no social media, and before you know it issues passed. Now, before anything happens, it becomes a hot issue, we become the target of attacks.

"It is not fair, if we want to harp on losses (1MDB), there are many other issues. 1MDB is

not running at a loss because we still have assets. Its debts can be settled. This is the perspective I want to put forward," he said.

As for administering the country, Najib said much had been done by the BN government for the people including the provision of the 1Malaysia People's Aid BR1M), Bumiputera Economic Empowerment Programme and achieving a three-fold increase in the value of government-linked companies (G20) in 20 years.

On the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Najib said revenue from GST would be returned the people in the form of beneficial programmes which would be announced by him when tabling Budget 2016 in October.

"However, I thank Johor UMNO for providing constructive criticism, for the support to allow me to clarify on the problems besetting UMNO," he said.

On the Crooked Bridge issue, Najib said:"I leave it to Johor UMNO but must have the proper justification".

The bridge was mooted to replace the causeway connecting Johor and Singapore but failed to take off.

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