

I'm open to criticism, but be fair, polite, says Najib
The Malaysian Insider
August 18, 2015
By Hasbullah Awang Chik

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said he has always allowed room for criticism against the government but said such views should be stated fairly and politely.

While critical views were accepted, the government should also be praised when it did well, Najib added, urging the younger generation to air their views with decorum.

"I just want the younger generation to be fair when they make evaluations and when they disagree. It is not true that as a leader, I have not allowed room for criticism.

"I appreciate hearing the voice of the people. The voices of the younger generation I will listen to and respect," he said in his speech when launching a seminar on moderation (wasatiyah) in Bangi today.

Najib said he hoped the younger generation would not listen to views that Malaysia was a downward spiral because of its economy and political scenario.

He acknowledged that there were different views about the government but added that ensuring peaceful and stable conditions was something he would not gamble on.

"We can hold differing views but they must be held in an environment of mutual respect and must not tarnish the country's name and the religion.

"In line with the goals of moderation, we cannot take an attitude that is always contrary to the government and the leadership. When something is not right, then criticism and disagreement is appropriate. When things are good, do not be reluctant to uphold it as something good that can bring benefit to the people," Najib said.

The prime minister's comments were made amid scrutiny of his leadership and silence on allegations about the purpose of RM2.6 billion that was transferred to his personal bank accounts and how the money has been spent, as well as over his brainchild, state investor 1Malaysia Development Bhd which has debts of RM42 billion. – August 18, 2015

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