

I prefer to explain Umno's political funding in private, Najib tells members

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Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak today said it is better for him to explain in private issues pertaining to funds for the party rather than discussing it openly.

This, he said, was because public discussions could affect the party, adding that opposition parties, too, were unable to explain the source of their funding.

"I can explain. No problem, but not openly because it can affect the party.

"As long as there is no stealing from the people or violation of the law... as long as we follow this rule, we just have to do what is necessary for the party," he said when launching the Alor Star Umno divisional meeting in Kedah this afternoon.

Najib, who is also prime minister, told the delegates at the Kolej Universiti Insaniah (Kuin) hall today that to move the party's machinery, they would need funds and this was also admitted by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is now his harshest critic.

He said Dr Mahathir once said that every political party needed funds. Najib was referring to the RM2.6 billion donation from the Middle East.

"But we must never buy votes. When I was Umno Youth chief, did I buy votes? I helped the party with the machinery and the funds whenever needed.

"That is my principle. I believe in my leader. I never questioned Pak Lah (his immediate predecessor Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi). He also never questioned Tun Dr Mahathir.

"People said that I am 'lembut' (soft)... don't, there is a limit. I hold on to my principles," he said, adding that party members should stop digging holes in their own ship.

He also told them to close ranks and strengthen the party and if they wanted to criticise their leaders, they must do it with decorum. – August 23, 2015.

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