

**Peace And Security Of Nation Is My Government's Top Priority: Najib
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KOTA KINABALU, Sept 16 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today said that the peace and security of the nation is his government's top priority.

As such, the prime minister said the government would do its utmost best to ensure peace and security of the country, as well as racial harmony, be well preserved.

"We have seen the blood on the streets. We have seen the burning shops, but let me say this - I will never allow that to happen in Malaysia. The peace and security of the nation is my government's top priority," he said.

Najib stressed this in his keynote address at the National Integration Seminar jointly organised by the National Unity and Integration Department and Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) here Wednesday.

Also present were Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Joseph Kurup.

Najib said Malaysia's continuous efforts to promote national unity had been recognised internationally, included by the Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz who once wrote that Malaysia "has much to teach the world, both about economics, and about how to construct a vibrant multiracial, multi-ethnic, multicultural society".

The prime minister said, as a democratic country Malaysia had consistently conducted elections since 1963, and even Malaysia's critics agreed that these elections had always been fiercely contested.

He said there were incidents in those elections where ministers lost their seats and the state government changed hands due to the voters choice, but the Barisan Nasional (BN) government had listened to the people when they had spoken.

"What is not right, though, is to undermine our democracy by spreading lies - despite our best efforts to engage in a civil manner, we cannot discuss and debate when the truth is hidden by a cloud of false allegations. It is not right when people try to stir up hatred against the government - a government that has been elected by the people.

"It is not right to organise rallies dominated by one race, with the expressed aim of toppling the government. As we have seen, this then leads to rallies by other races. This could not be more dangerous and risks tearing apart the fabric of our democracy, our harmony, our unity.

"The opposition parties and, I'm sad to say, are playing with fire. They conspire with blackmailers, forgers and foreigners who want to interfere with our country just as they

did in colonial times. There is no lie they will not tell, no rumours they will not spread, so that they can say Malaysia is on a dangerous course," he said.

Najib considered the parties as dangerous and had desperate wish to overthrow a democratically-elected government and they were willing to risk having the instability that had led to violent revolutions in many countries - some very close to Malaysia.

However, Najib convinced that despite efforts by the opposition, including certain former senior leaders of the country, to create divisions amongst the people, the peace and harmony in Malaysia would prevail and the people would stay united.

He said it was only through pursuing national unity - managing our differences, not letting them cause bitterness and anger between us - and the regular course of parliamentary democracy, that would make Malaysia admired by friends around the world.

"I am determined that we will do so. This government will never stop fighting to preserve the peace, harmony and prosperity of the Malaysia we all love," Najib said.

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