

**Cartoonists Need To Recognise Sensitivities – Najib
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PUTRAJAYA, Oct 12 (Bernama) -- Malaysian cartoonists are reminded to recognise the sensitivities of the people of various races and religions in their work to preserve unity and harmony, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said if work ethics were respected and not being compromised, it could avoid many problems and at the same time would ensure the country's move towards a developed country.

"You can illustrate on politics, no problem. But there are certain things that should not be used as work of art as it can disrupt harmony among the people," he said in his speech at the 2015 Kampung Boy Awards which was held in conjunction with the cartoon's 50th anniversary celebration, here Monday.

Citing the example of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, which produced a caricature of Prophet Muhammad, Najib said it was a form of work that was not only irresponsible, but also insensitive to the Muslims, thus creating tension.

"Although we can say that this is a freedom of speech and human rights but I think there is no real absolute freedom. If we believe in absolute freedom, we will not respect and understand others' sensitivities, causing tension and conflict in the country," he said.

On Lat's, or his real name Datuk Mohammad Nor Khalid, works, the prime minister described the cartoonist as a special person who is famous internationally.

In fact, Najib admitted that he, just like other Malaysians, was also fond of Lat's cartoons such as 'The Kampung Boy', 'Keluarga Si Mamat' and 'Town Boy'.

"The message conveyed in his work depict harmony of the society and it is appropriate with the spirit of 1Malaysia," he said.

Najib also expressed the government's willingness to consider Malaysian Cartoonist Club's application to set up a 'cartoonist's house' to showcase their work.

The Kampung Boy Awards, organised by the club, was named after the popular series by Lat which had been reprinted in 16 editions and translated into seven languages.

At the event, the prime minister presented the award to eight cartoonists with the main award presented to Jaafar Taib, famous for his works in 'Gila-Gila' magazine.

Other recipients were Dilfitri Tajudin or Lambok (Promising Young Cartoonist Award); Saadon Ishak or Don (Animated Cartoon Character Award); Reggie Lee (Editorial Cartoonist Award); Abd Fatah Ngah (Malaysiana Cartoonist Award); Sabariah Jais or Cabai

(Best Cartoonist Award); Zainal Buang Hussein (Legendary Cartoonist Award) and Meor Shariman Meor Hassan or Mishar (Special Jury Award).

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