

**Don't Make 1MDB A Political Football – Najib
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SHAH ALAM, Oct 18 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has urged the people not to make 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) into a political football and let the company do its job.

The prime minister said: "Allow the 1MDB issue to be resolved. If there are wrongdoings (in 1MDB), let the PAC (Public Accounts Committee) find out, and appropriate action will be taken.

"Since we have been elected by the people, we will do our level best," he said when officiating at the 44th Gerakan national delegates' conference, here, today.

Also present were Barisan Nasional (BN) secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, Gerakan president Datuk Mah Siew Keong and MCA president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai.

Najib, who is also Finance Minister, said every country had experienced difficult times, including Malaysia which went through the ASEAN financial crisis and managed to recover as there was a strong belief in the leadership.

"If we support the leadership, God willing, we will overcome all the political and economic challenges. Even the 1MDB problem can be resolved," he said.

"Don't allow it (1MDB) be a political football just because you want to change the government and leadership of the country. You can't because we are democratically elected by the people."

On the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), Najib said Malaysia should be open to the global market in order to become a successful nation.

"That is why we are participating in the TPPA...because we are a major trading nation, and a major trading nation needs markets. Even furniture suppliers in Muar (Johor) can export to TPPA countries.

"In principle, it is good if we sign the TPPA, but we protect our domestic market. Believe me, what we are doing is the right way...we believe that Malaysia is modern and progressive but we must be open to the world," he said.

The TPPA will be debated in Parliament soon and it will take three months before any decision on whether to sign the agreement is made.

Touching on the recent increase in toll rates, Najib said the government will have less money for other things if it chose to compensate toll concessionaires over raising the toll

rates.

"If you don't raise the toll, you have to pay compensation, (then) less money for other things, less money for BR1M (1Malaysia People's Aid).

"So you have to decide. There is always a trade-off because of the limited funds," he said.

"So sometimes, we have to raise (the toll rates), we have no choice. If not, we will have to pay compensation," he added.

Citing Penang, Najib said the DAP-led government had also moved to increase among others water tariff and parking charges.

Najib also pointed out that the government also cannot afford to borrow money just to implement projects for the people as such a move would only increase the country's debt.

He also told the delegates that the government had to adhere to the agreements with the concession companies, which were decided 20 years ago.

"Of course I can say it was not during my time, it was during my predecessors time, but I am not like that.

"There is the principle of common responsibility as I was part of the government then," he said.

Twelve major highway concessionaires in the Klang Valley have increased their toll rates, ranging from between 10 sen and RM6 since last Thursday.

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