

Recognise sensitivities, Najib tells cartoonists
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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 Razak.

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

"You can illustrate on politics, no problem. But there are certain things that should not be used as works 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 yesterday.

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, 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, or Datuk Mohammad Nor Khalid, the prime minister said the cartoonist was a special person who was famous internationally.

Najib added 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 depicts harmony of the society and it is appropriate with the spirit of 1Malaysia," he said. – Bernama, October 13, 2015.

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