

Tun Abdul Razak Was a Great Democrat Who Never Use His Unprecedented Powers as Mageran's Director of Operation – Najib

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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 14 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on Thursday hailed his late father Tun Abdul Razak Hussein as a great democrat who never uses his unprecedented powers as Director of Operation of the National Operations Council.

"He never wanted to use the powers he wielded - in fact he seemed fearful of them - and as soon as he could he sought to relinquish them," said the Prime Minister when launching a one-day special commemorative seminar on Abdul Razak, the second prime minister, who died 40 years ago in office, here today.

The Prime Minister said many others in Abdul Razak's situation would have held onto those powers.

"Indeed, his actions went against the grain of many leaders in the world, and this region at the time," he said.

Abdul Razak served as prime minister from 1970 to 1976. He died of leukemia on Jan 14, 1976, at the age of 53.

Najib, Abdul Razak's eldest son, said by 1971, after the racial riots in May 13, 1969, peace and order had been restored in the country and Abdul Razak willingly re-established parliamentary rule.

"That was a remarkably swift turnaround. It saved Malaysia, and it saved Malaysian democracy from the fate that many other developing countries endured," he said.

He said for that alone, Abdul Razak would be remembered as one of Malaysia's greatest leaders.

"But his achievements extended far beyond that, and immeasurably transformed our country and our region for the better," he said.

Najib said the legacies of Abdul Razak's leadership had always been in his mind throughout his time in politics, "from my days as a young Member of Parliament, as Menteri Besar of Pahang, as a minister and then prime minister."

"They have been my inspiration, and as leader of this country I have strived to continue his work," he said.

Najib said Abdul Razak had laid the foundations, and "it is for us, and for future generations, to continue building on them in a way that would make him proud."

He said the New Economic Model (NEM) continued and extended the merit-based principles of the New Economic Policy (NEP) introduced by Abdul Razak.

He said the affirmative action of the NEP which was to ensure the Bumiputera were not left behind, had got the government arguing for its inclusion in the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), "and this was accepted, which was a significant achievement."

"We have joined this agreement (TPPA) on our terms, and with affirmative action policies enshrined in an international treaty," he said.

Touching on the 1Malaysia policy, he said it was drawn on the strength and pillars of the Rukunegara, (while) the relationship with China that Tun Razak forged had grown to the extent that it was now our largest trading partner.

Najib said his father was also one of the founders of ASEAN, and last year when Malaysia chaired ASEAN, he had the privilege of being a signatory to the document that had transformed the 10-nation association into a community.

During his 30-minute speech, Najib shed tears as he said it touched on his father's commitment to the country.

"He gave his life for this country. Today, 40 years after his passing, I stand before you and say that I am proud to be his son, and that every day I work to live up to that lineage.

"He is an example for me, and an inspiration for all Malaysians," said Najib while wiping off the tears from his eyes.

Najib said the 40 years of the passing of his father also marked his four decades in politics.

"As a month after his passing, indeed because of his passing, I stood for election in his old constituency of Pekan.

"Tun Razak's towering achievements were one of the reasons that was a difficult decision to take. I was just 22, and had only recently returned from university in England," he said.

Najib also launched a book on his father, titled "My Recollections of Tun Abdul Razak" written by Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid, the chancellor of UNIRAZAK university.

Present at the function today was Najib's mother, Tun Rahah Noah and his brothers Datuk Mohamed Nizam, Datuk Ahmad Johari, Datuk Seri Mohamad Nazir and Datuk Nazim.

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