

**PM Thanks Abu Zahar for a Job Well Done As Dewan Negara President**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 22 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today recorded his appreciation to Senator Tan Sri Abu Zahar Ujang who as Dewan Negara president did an excellent job in helping to smoothen the process of democracy in the country.

Najib said Abu Zahar was outstanding in his role as Dewan Negara president for two terms beginning April 26, 2010 and had ensured that the legislative body was not seen as a mere 'rubber stamp'.

"His capability and firmness as the president of the Dewan Negara, although he is sometimes seen as fierce, had always been fair and balanced in making decisions.

"This is important because as the president (of the Dewan Negara), it is not only crucial to get the trust of the government but also from the opposition so that the institution of the Dewan Negara and the Dewan Rakyat is seen as credible legislative bodies which really represent the people," he said at the farewell ceremony to mark the end of Abu Zahar's tenure as the president of the Dewan Negara and launching of the book "Yang Dipertua Dewan Negara ke-16" here tonight.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

Also present were Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Seri Pandikar Amin Mulia, several cabinet ministers, deputy ministers, members of Parliament and senators.

Abu Zahar, 72, will end his tenure as Dewan Negara president on April 25.

The Prime Minister said as Dewan Negara president, Abu Zahar has a lot of latitude to senators to voice their ideas and views even though they may have had different opinions.

Commenting further, Najib said in the spirit of democracy, having different opinions was not an unhealthy thing.

"Many times, the views aired in the Dewan Negara and the Dewan Rakyat have been taken into consideration and we have made amendments. Sometimes we even withdraw bills because we respect the views of these two bodies.

"I think we have struck the right balance. If there are improvements, we agree because through efforts like this, the status of Parliament will be improved," he said.

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