

Najib Vows to Hand over Strong Government, Party To Successor
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TUMPAT, Aug 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today he would hand over a strong government and party to his successor to carry on with the legacy of the leaders before him (the successor).

However, to realise this, the UMNO president said, UMNO members must remain loyal and not criticise the current party leadership despite having differences of opinion.

"Our struggle goes beyond leaders. When I retire, I want to hand over a strong government and party. I will ask my successor to take the government and party to greater heights than they were during my administration," he said.

The Prime Minister was addressing a 'Leader with the People' session and opening the Tumpat UMNO Division delegates meeting at Sekolah Kebangsaan Kubang Batang here.

Najib said it was for this reason that he held former Prime Minister and his predecessor Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in high regard and appreciated the latter's request to him to take Malaysia to greater heights than it was during his (Abdullah's) administration.

When the time comes, he said, it would be never be his desire to interfere in the administration of his successor and go to the extent of setting up a new political party.

Najib said UMNO members must safeguard what the party had built over the years and should not do anything to destroy it.

Islam, he said, encouraged followers to criticise their leaders in a proper manner besides adopting the 'musyawarah' (meeting) and 'syura' (consultation) approaches.

"We must safeguard our party, consolidate our struggle. Even after having been a leader for 22 years, he does not understand ... wants to topple the party.

"Don't cross the line. The party is our heritage. Adopt proper procedures in accordance with the party and Islamic concepts," he said without naming any leader.

Kelantan UMNO Liaison Committee chairman Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed and deputy chairman Datuk Ahmad Jazlan Yaakub; UMNO Information chief Tan Sri Annuar Musa; Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Senator Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki and Tumpat UMNO acting chief Datuk Rosdi Ab Aziz were among present at the event.

Najib also said that UMNO leaders, particularly those in Kelantan, must remain humble and adapt themselves to the local situation in order for the party and Barisan Nasional to win the next general election.

He said local leaders should discard any egotism if they were not selected to represent their constituencies and should always place party interests above their own.

"Leaders must go down to the ground with the proper attitude that is welcomed and accepted by the people. Do not drive there in a luxury car. Do not forget to fulfil promises, do not be arrogant. These are taboo in Kelantan. Be a leader in accordance with the local situation," he said.

"When one places one's interests above the party's, there is bound to be conflict and disunity. Then, do not hope of winning (elections). Do not be a sheep in wolf's clothing, being nice to leaders and condemning them behind their backs," he said.

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