

**UMNO Survived Until Today Due To Practice of Wala' - PM Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 1 (Bernama) -- UMNO is able to survive until today due to the practice of wala' and loyalty in the UMNO tradition, said its president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said, the UMNO's wala' principle carried the meaning of the value of love, allegiance, obedience and bai'ah which were compulsory to be given to a legitimate leader, which in the context of UMNO was the party president while in the government, it was the prime minister.

"Wala' is not only towards the body or individual, but, wala' comprises the presidential institution or that of the prime minister, held by someone," he said in his policy speech at the 2016 UMNO General Assembly, here, today.

He noted that UMNO had successfully survived more than seven decades, although it had faced various obstacles and frequent attempts to divide the party into cliques.

The Prime Minister said, it was the supreme symbol of the biggest Malay party in upholding the Eastern custom and culture, based on the Syariah trail to demonstrate support for a president or prime minister, all this while.

Citing several upheavels including the clash between Team A and Team B during the UMNO presidential election in 1987 and the declaration of UMNO as illegal on Feb 4, 1988, Najib noted that UMNO people however continued to be loyal to their leaders.

"Who were the people at the critical and anxious moment that stood strong supporting and assisting Dr Mahathir (Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad) as president, until the new UMNO was again accepted legally? Who else, who else if not us, the UMNO people," he said.

During the era of Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's administration, Najib said, he as the party deputy president at that time, together with the majority of leaders and the whole UMNO members continued to be loyal, not only towards the body, by the institution held and embraced by the UMNO president and the prime minister.

He stressed that wala' and the full loyalty were compulsory to be accepted by anyone who were going to be at the top later on and took over the positions of president and prime minister.

"Wala' and loyalty in the Malay world, culture and our religion is the spirit of working as a team in a strong and solid front which is not separated from its leader and chief," he said.

In his speech, Najib also applauded the loyalty and wala' of Puteri UMNO as what was put on display by Semporna Puteri UMNO chief Zakiah Kalipunya who despite facing the UMNO division's crisis, continued to be loyal and did not quit the party.

"The same with Pagoh Puteri UMNO chief Rohaiza Ahmad and her team.

"These were the examples of wala' and the true loyalty which we are hoping," he said while urging the delegates to give a standing ovation to both of them.

Touching on the trustworthy leadership, Najib said, he chose to stay ambitious (berjiwa besar) and would advise and remind in a good way, not to personally criticise former leaders who had left the party.

"The majority of them were former leaders, a minister and even nationalist who had taken the Oath of Office and Secrecy in the name of Allah with the words of Wallahi, Wabillahi, Watallahi, however today, they are 'foreigners' to us, and even betrayed our struggle," he said.

The Prime Minister said, he had also asked the Muslim scholars on the oath's violation from the perspective of Islamic law and its effects.

The answer given, he said, was that the violation would be a great sin and indicated signs of hypocrisy (munafik) of the violators.

"It's not weird that this thing happened, as the man himself had once said, 'Melayu mudah lupa' (Malays easily forget).

"And thus, I would like to ask now, who was actually 'Melayu yang mudah lupa itu?' It's certainly not us, as the true UMNO Malays are those who are loyal and grateful, and will not betray the party," he added.

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