

## **Negaraku Reverberates In Putrajaya**

PUTRAJAYA, March 18 (Bernama) -- The cries of "Negaraku" reverberated in the excitement of a heightened display of patriotism by thousands of Malaysians at the federal administrative capital today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak when launching the "Ekspresi Negaraku" (Negaraku Expression) programme at Dataran Putrajaya, here, spurred on the patriotic spirit with the cry of "Negaraku" three times followed by "Malaysia, Malaysia, Malaysia".

In his speech filled with the word, patriotism, Najib said the Negaraku Expression was for Malaysians to demonstrate their feelings and expression for the country.

"Patriotism is the foundation and main element for a strong identity which we need to foster if we want to be a nation that is peaceful, harmonious and united," he said.

Najib stressed the importance of identity, the pillar for a peaceful, harmonious and united country.

"This is the country of our birth, the place where we toddled when we were small, were schooled and grew up in, earn a living as adults and when the time comes, we will be laid to rest here, where we were born," he said.

Citing a number of good and bad incidents that occurred in the country, Najib said as citizens who loved Malaysia, all must continue to defend the country from internal and external threats.

One example of a bad incident the prime minister gave was the infiltration by militants from southern Philippines in Lahad Datu and Semporna, Sabah on March 3, 2013 which took the lives of members of the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM).

Recalling the incident, he said when a team from the Malaysian security forces tried to enter a house in Kampung Sri Jaya, Semporna to arrest the terrorists involved, they were ambushed due to the action of a police corporal who divulged information on the operation.

"In that incident, six patriotic members of PDRM including two officers were killed in the most cruel manner. What saddened me and other Malaysians was that they were killed because of an enemy within," he said.

Najib said he could not forget this sad incident which happened because of an unpatriotic citizen who was willing to be in cahoots with the enemy.

Najib also disclosed that Malaysia almost missed a huge investment from Saudi Aramco because of the unpatriotic attitude of those who channelled false information on the country, including alleging that Malaysia was a political risk to the oil company.

Saudi Aramco which was initially reluctant to invest after receiving the false information, in the end decided to invest RM31 billion in Malaysia after being given genuine information that Malaysia was a successful country and ranked A, he said.

Najib also mentioned the action of a former leader of the country who disparaged Malaysia by claiming that it was among the 10 most corrupted countries in the world, when Malaysia was actually placed 55th among 160 countries.

"We are not that bad. As prime minister, I can accept that there is still room for improvement but I cannot accept the attempt to topple the government by tarnishing Malaysia's image," he said.

Najib said those who gathered here today for the Negaraku Expression programme came to state that Malaysia was not a failed country but a successful one and it would be more successful if its people strengthened their love for the country.

He said the best example in showing love for the country was by being united in defending the country's image during the strained diplomatic relations between Malaysia and North Korea.

Such love, he said, could also be seen when Malaysians showed their support for the nation's athletes competing in the Rio Olympic Games and Rio Paralympics last year.

"I was in Putrajaya together with thousands of the area's residents in cheering for Datuk Lee Chong Wei (in the badminton finals) and we know because of the spirit of Malaysians, we almost won gold.

"It was the same when Mohd Faiz Subri won the FIFA Puskas Award (for the best goal) because many Malaysians voted for him, that was why he won," he said followed by thunderous applause from the 10,000-strong crowd.

Najib said Malaysians were truly patriotic when they stood behind their beloved country when Malaysia was facing threats.

"We are patriots when we as public servants work earnestly and serve the people well.

"We are patriots if as educators, we teach children in the classroom with full of love and dedication. We are patriots too as parents who educate our children commendably," he said.

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