

Voice your opinions, Najib tells civil servants

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PUTRAJAYA: Civil servants may speak up if they disagree with any government proposals.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said they should feel comfortable giving their opinions as the civil service is the "backbone" of the Government.

"Sometimes we have very enthusiastic officials who say 'yes sir, I will do it' even before a minister finishes his sentence,"

he said.

"They should listen carefully and understand what is being said, and if they don't agree, they can give their views to the ministers."

"I don't think our ministers are so arrogant or stern that they cannot listen to their views."

Najib was addressing staff of the Prime Minister's Department at their monthly assembly yesterday on behalf of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is in Australia recov-

ering from a sinus operation.

"What I really don't like is when decisions are made, the officials don't want to implement them. We don't need 'Sir Humphreys' like in the sitcom *Yes, Minister*," Najib said, referring to the 1980s British comedy series about civil servants who frustrate the work of Cabinet ministers.

He reminded civil servants that they would determine the success of the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

He said implementation of the 9MP was the "acid test", as it

would show how successful the Government was.

"Now we are at the roll-out, implementation stage. We made a promise to the people during the last election and we received a huge mandate from them."

"They placed their trust on our shoulders and we have the political will to do all we have promised," he said.

Najib said the most important principle for civil servants was to be loyal to the government of the day and not "play politics".