

## **ACCCIM: Steps to help Malays not a threat to non-bumis**

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**By Kow Kwan Yee**

Measures to enhance the economic role of the Malays, to be announced by Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak on Saturday, will not threaten the status of non-Malays, says a major Chinese commerce group.

NONEThe Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) believes the announcement will be on policies to further assist the underprivileged groups within the Malays.

ACCCIM vice-president Lim Sing (right) told Malaysiakini today that it was unlikely for the country to move backwards by rolling back affirmative action under the New Economic Policy (NEP), which has been drawing debate since its implementation in 1971.

Over the years, Lim said, the capabilities of the Malays in competing in a free market as well as in the private sector have been getting greater but still, there were underprivileged groups that needed to be taken care of.

"To me, Najib is a moderate leader. I hope he can be more inclusive and look at the needs of all the races at the same time," he said.

New Straits Times had earlier cited senior government officers as saying that Najib's announcement would include initiatives such as equity ownership, business, "human capital", social and economic development and steps to strengthen state institutions that promote the economic role of Malays.

Najib's plan to be telecast live

The prime minister is scheduled to make the announcement at UiTM in Shah Alam at 10.30am on Saturday and this will be aired by all official TV channels as well as streamed live via [www.epu.gov.my](http://www.epu.gov.my) and [www.teraju.gov.my](http://www.teraju.gov.my).

Najib has many times pledged to make government assistance based more on needs rather than on race.

The NEP was an ambitious affirmative action programme launched by the government in 1971. It nominally came to an end in 1990, and the succeeding policy pursued similar affirmative actions.

Asked if fiscal policy based on race is not relevant any more, Lim refused to comment and would only say that it was up to the government to decide.

Despite Chinese dominance in business and economy in the country, Lim highlighted the dilemma of Chinese entrepreneurs in getting bank loans for small- and medium-scale enterprises.

“The success rate of the Chinese in getting their bank loans approved is relatively low compared with that of the other races,” he said.

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