

Najib, Modi inaugurate Torana Gate as mark of friendship
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi today jointly inaugurated the Torana Gate in 'Little India', Brickfields in Kuala Lumpur to symbolise friendship between both countries.

Torana Gate is a gift from the Indian government to the people of Malaysia as a mark of continued friendship between both countries and it was announced by Modi's predecessor, Dr Manmohan Singh during his official visit to Malaysia in October 2010.

Najib in his speech said the Torana Gate marked another high point in the long-standing history of good relations between Malaysia and India.

He said it signalled closer cooperation and a new dimension in people-to-people engagement between both countries.

"As friends bound by historical ties, it is natural that Malaysia and India continually strive to make the relations between our two countries and peoples ever deeper and stronger," he added before opening the Torana Gate.

Najib said the gate also offered a way into the rich culture and history of India, one of the oldest and greatest civilisations in the world.

He was confident the Torana Gate, which was identical to the design of the 'Great Stupa' at Sanchi, India, would swiftly become a tourist attraction in Kuala Lumpur.

The Malaysian prime minister noted that the country had received a substantial number of tourists from India over the years and he welcomed even more.

"Malaysia is not just business-friendly but also visitor-friendly, and I am sure visitors from India will soon feel at home here," he added.

Najib also conveyed his appreciation to experts and teams from both countries in ensuring the successful construction of the Torana Gate, whose detailed craftsmanship and magnificent architecture would surely make it a new landmark in Kuala Lumpur.

Meanwhile, Modi in his speech said the Torana Gate would be another milestone in the relationship between both countries.

“This will further strengthen the bilateral relationship, not just oneconomy and social development but also on culture and tradition,” he added.

The Indian prime minister said the relationship between both countries had stepped into another level under Najib’s leadership.

“During the three-day visit to Malaysia, I am confident the relationship will become more stronger and deeper, with high speed.”

The 10-metre high Torana Gate has a width of 7.3 metres while most of the carvings on the blocks are jewellery-patterned floral and geometric shapes.

Apart from the sandstone carvings, the gate also consists of granite slabs, bollard sculptures carved out of solid stone and low stone fenced wall.

- *Bernama*