

Now, Najib woos Japanese corporate leaders
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After wooing Chinese investors about a fortnight ago, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is now strengthening the bond with the Japanese investors.

He has called on Japanese captains of industries to look for more opportunities in Malaysia as the country was undergoing economic transformation programmes towards being a high-income nation for the benefit of the rakyat.

Najib, who is on a three-day working visit to this country starting yesterday, said the opportunities were in the areas including renewable energy, green technology and high-technology (hi-tech) development.

"Some of the areas include renewable energy, green technology, hi-tech development as we move up the value chain... and wanting to become an advanced economy.

"Malaysia is no longer competing at the level of low technology but we want to move up to ensure that our people will benefit from higher paying jobs," he said during a luncheon with the captains of Japanese industries in Tokyo today.

Among those present were NEC Corporation chairperson Nobuhiro Endo, Mitsubishi Corporation chairperson Mikio Sasaki, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of East Japan Railway Company Tetsuro Tomita, Sumitomo Corporation chairperson Kazuo Omori, Taisei Construction chairperson Takashi Yamauchi, Mitsui Co Ltd CEO Tatsuo Yasunaga, Japan Petroleum Exploration Co CEO Hideichi Okada, Tokyo Gas Co Ltd CEO Michiaki Hitose and IHI Corporation CEO Tsugio Mitsuoka.

Malaysia, Najib said, has benefitted from the strong presence of the Japanese in the country for many years with their investments of approximately US\$27 billion (RM127.4 billion) and had created over 350,000 jobs.

In 2015, Japan was Malaysia's fourth largest trading partner globally and continues to be the largest foreign investors in the manufacturing sector with more than 1,400 Japanese companies currently operating in Malaysia.

A total of 60 projects with Japanese participation were approved last year with investments amounting to RM4 billion, which were expected to generate 5,201 jobs.

In drawing his attention to the government's commitment towards moving Malaysia into an advanced economy, Najib said: "Malaysia will continue with our policy to remain at the forefront in terms of our capability to compete.

"Therefore investment, continued investment in infrastructure, in human capital and in the

internet economy would be summarily areas that would have a high priority as we move forward," he said.

As the two nations will be celebrating 60th anniversary of their diplomatic relations next year, the prime minister said, it was important for them to discuss the programmes both countries could undertake to signify this important milestone.

Najib met the Chinese investors during his six-day official visit to China starting Oct 31.

- *Bernama*

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