

PM's 'greater vision' for all Malaysians
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KOTA KINABALU - Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has pledged to push for greater opportunities for people of all races and promised that Sabah and Sarawak will achieve social and economic parities with Peninsula Malaysia within the next few years.

In his speech at the first Malaysia Day national celebration at Padang Merdeka here on Thursday night, Najib said his aim was to see these dreams fulfilled.

"My aim is to see Sabah and Sarawak to be fully on par with Peninsula Malaysia. God willing, within the next few years, this will become a reality," he told over 10,000 people who had gathered for the historic event..

Najib said the decision of the leaders and people in Sabah and Sarawak to join in Malaysia's formation was a wise move which had seen significant changes in both states in terms of development.

"The Government is giving priority assistance to those still very much in need of help because we realise that not all segments of society are at the same level now in terms of economic and social standing. This is due largely to the geographical divide," he said.

Najib said September 16 was the excellent occasion to put in place a 'greater vision' to develop the whole country. He vowed not let extremism and fanaticism derail his plans.

"Some people are worried that there will be confusion because we are celebrating August 31 and September 16 as public holidays.

"August 31 is the day we achieved independence and September 16 is the day we united into one big nation," *The Star* quoted him as saying.

Najib said the people must remember that Malaysia's formation was fraught with challenges, adding that there had been past attempts by neighbouring countries to stop it.

"We owe it to our past leaders and their struggle to continue their good work and to bring Malaysia to greater heights," he said.

He later presented Tokoh Malaysia awards to four prominent leaders - two from Peninsula Malaysia and one each from Sabah and Sarawak for their contribution.

In PETALING JAYA, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin urged Malaysians not take the country's harmony and unity for granted but work towards preserving the peace.

This was in line with the country's goal of becoming a developed nation by 2020 that was stable, united and peaceful, he said, *The Star* reported.

"I hope the Malaysia Day celebration will speed up the social and psychological integration process between Malaysians of all races despite our geographical locations," he said in his Malaysia Day message.

Source : <http://www.malaysianmirror.com/media-buzz-detail/41-opinion/49364>