

NEWS

6.2pc growth 'remarkable'

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RIGHT TRACK: Govt's reform programmes showing good results, says PM

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THE country's 6.2 per cent in economic growth in the first quarter of this year shows that the government is on the right track as its transformation programmes are yielding positive results, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Describing the growth as remarkable, Najib said the government would ensure that the momentum continued through initiatives introduced under the Government Transformation and Economic Transformation Programmes.

"While other countries are facing problems, we have recorded convincing growth (in our gross domestic product).

"It shows that we are moving in the right direction," said Najib, who is also finance minister, in his speech when opening the Pekan Community College here yesterday.

The surge in the GDP exceeded the 5.5 per cent growth projected by Bank Negara.

Najib also urged employers and workers to focus on improving their skills to face new challenges.

With the fast changes in technology, he said the skills that a worker had would become obsolete



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak greeting people after announcing the 10 per cent dividend for the special farmer investment scheme in Pekan yesterday. Pic by Luqman Hakim Zubir

in the future. At the same time, he said the education system must be able to produce the type of workers needed in the future.

"This is among the main challenges. We have to ensure that our children could take up these jobs, which do not exist now, but will be available in the next 10 to 20 years."

Under the present education system, Najib said, school-leavers who had completed their 11 years of schooling did not have the skills that were required by small and medium sized industries or factories.

Therefore, he said, the government had built technical and vo-

catational institutions, including community colleges, to fulfil industry demands.

He said community colleges provided suitable skills for school-leavers who could not pursue their studies at the tertiary level.

Najib, who is also Pekan member of parliament, said the RM12.3 million Pekan Community College had trained more than 4,000 people since its inception in April 2011.

Second Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, in his speech, said about 1.3 million people had undergone courses at 90 community colleges nationwide since 2004.

Among them were senior citizens, disabled people, pensioners and security forces personnel.

At the function, Najib also witnessed the signing of memoranda of understanding between Pekan Community College and Honda Malaysia, Hicom Automotive Manufacturer Sdn Bhd, IngressAuto Sdn Bhd, Berjaya Group, Asean Retail Chains and Franchise Federation and Universiti Malaysia Pahang.

The MoUs, among others, will enable the college to help develop hybrid technology and provide courses that are required by the automotive and tourism industries.