

Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	20 August 2015

Big boost for 'Bumipreneurs'

NST - 20/8/2015

BAHTERA: Data platform will link businesses to agencies, suppliers

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THE Bumiputera entrepreneur community is expected to receive a boost with the launch of Bumipreneurs of Tomorrow (Bahtera), a big data platform that will connect entrepreneurs with each other as well as key business agencies.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who launched the platform here yesterday, said Bahtera would provide the community with information for marketing and connecting with suppliers and other Bumiputera companies.

"It is hoped that this programme will create an additional market for Bumiputera entrepreneurs and an environment where they can receive mutual support," he said.

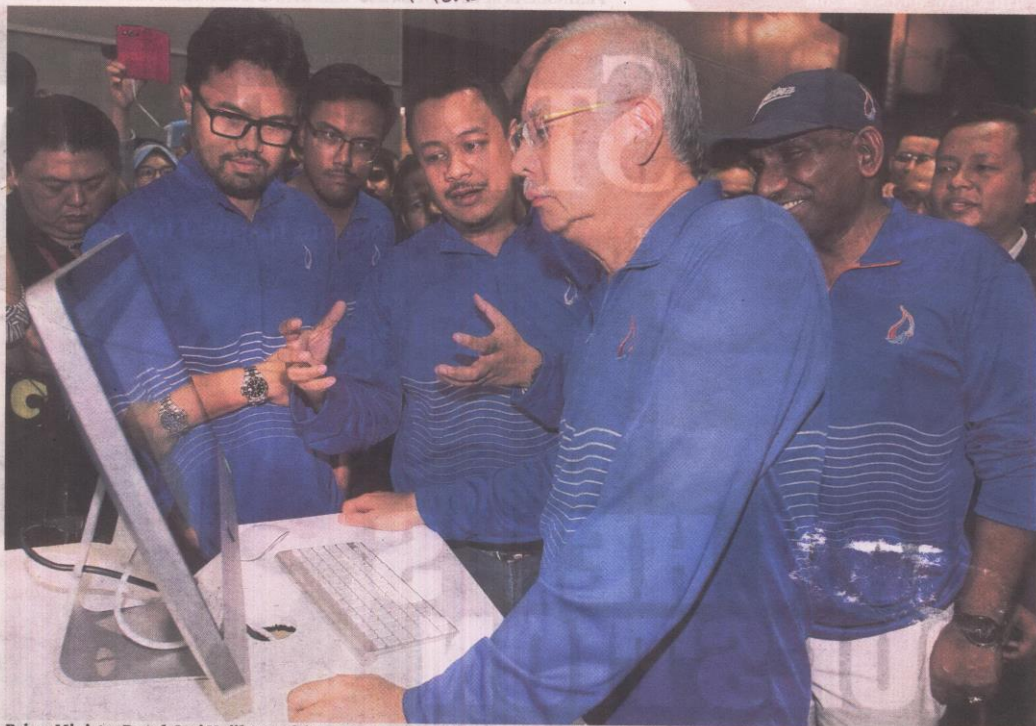
"We want entrepreneurs who are able to compete in a challenging global economic environment."

The platform will contain information from the Companies Commission, eProcurement, Bumiputera Agenda Steering Unit (Teraju), the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) and other entities related to Bumiputera entrepreneurship.

It will also list Bumiputera companies according to their business sector, for entrepreneurs to connect with and buy from Bumiputera suppliers at a reasonable price.

Around 100,000 businesses have signed up to the platform, with the number expected to increase.

"The government's efforts have



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak listening to a presentation from Persatuan Generasi Usahawan Muda Berjaya president **Agli Faisal** (second from left) at the launch of Bumipreneurs of Tomorrow in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. With them is **Finance Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah** (right). Pic by Khairull Azry Bidin

spurred the creation of the Bumiputera middle-class, comprising qualified professionals, such as doctors, engineers and architects.

"But we want to create a new class of Bumiputeras — entrepreneurs who can stand on the strength of their product rather than on gov-

ernment assistance.

"This is the last leg in our efforts to create a strong Bumiputera entrepreneur community," said Najib.

He said lessons could be learnt from studies by American political theorist Francis Fukuyama, comparing the social economic situations

between Asian Americans and African Americans.

According to the study, Najib said, Asian Americans were found to be more economically successful due to higher levels of trust and support within the community.

"The lesson here is that we should

not only look at the government for help, but we should also look for help and support from each other."

Present were Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ali Hamsa and Finance Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah.