

Newspaper	The Star
Date	17 December 2015

PM stresses on innovation

The Star - 17/12/2015

Creativity also needed to survive challenging climate, says Najib

By JOSEPH KAOS Jr
joekaosjr@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: As Malaysia prepares to plan beyond 2020, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has stressed on the need for more innovation and creativity to survive a more "challenging climate".

The Prime Minister said that with the year 2020 drawing ever closer, Malaysia must start its post-2020 discourse now rather than later.

"Today, the world is witnessing a very challenging economic environment. If we want Malaysia to be a country that is respected, we need to compete with the best in order to survive this competitive world.

"To achieve higher than other countries, we have no choice but to ensure that everything we do is based on high innovation and creativity.

"The post-2020 discourse needs to start early and we should not wait until 2020 arrives.

"While we plan on the country's future direction, I am confident that innovation and creativity will be an important dimension in this discourse," he said in his speech at the Prime Minister's Innovation Awards 2015 (AIPM) here yesterday.

The Government, he added, had taken all kinds of steps to enhance Malaysia's capabilities as a country, and to think and act innovatively.

Creating wealth, Najib said, did not only rely on hard work and productivity.

"That 'quantum leap' can only be made if our hard work and efforts are based on innovation and creativity.

"As the renowned inventor Edward de Bono once said: 'As competition intensifies, the need for



Well done: Gen Zulkifeli (third from left) receiving the AIPM award from Najib in Putrajaya. Also present are (from far left) Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liew Tiong Lai, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ali Hamsa, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (on Najib's right, in suit) and other Government leaders.

creative thinking increases. It is no longer enough to do the same thing better, no longer enough to be efficient and solve problems," he said.

Malaysia, he said, was ranked 32nd overall in this year's Global Innovation Index and 18th out of 140 countries in the Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016.

"One of the 12 pillars in this Global Competitiveness Report is innovation. And in this aspect, Malaysia ranked 20th with a score of 4.80," said Najib.

The Government, he said, had taken several measures to drive innovation in the country and this

was reflected in the recent Budget 2016 announcement.

"The Budget set aside RM100mil to the National Innovation Agency, RM200mil to Malaysia Debt Ventures Bhd under the funding scheme for technology and innovation acceleration and RM35mil to the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre as a leading regional entrepreneurship and innovation hub," said Najib.

He also reminded government agencies that they needed to avoid overlapping jobs and roles in order to optimise government spending.

Later, Najib presented the AIPM

2015 award to the Armed Forces for their "Program Jiwa Murni" rural infrastructure project.

Armed Forces chief Gen Tan Sri Dr Zulkifeli Mohd Zin received the award trophy from Najib, which also came with a cash prize of RM1mil.

Under the programme, the Armed Forces built over 269km of roads and 45 bridges in about 108 villages in Sarawak, Pahang, Terengganu and Perak using "fast track" method that emphasised on cost-effectiveness. The total cost incurred to build those roads and bridges was RM319.03mil.