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'Identify your strengths'

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FINE EXAMPLES:

Muslim nations can progress by learning from each other, says Najib



LOKMAN MANSOR

JAKARTA

MUSLIM nations should identify and list down their strengths in certain fields that can then be considered by other Muslim nations, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

Malaysia, for example, was a leader in Islamic banking and finance, accounting for 54 per cent of global sukuk, or Islamic bond issuances, he said.

Another example is the Sabiha Gokcen International Airport in Turkey, which is the airport with the biggest increase in passenger traffic in Europe for five years in a row, Najib said.

The airport is managed by Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB).

"This shows our success and capability on merit. Similarly in Indonesia, the need for infrastructure is huge, and the decision in principle to give 40,000 affordable houses to Malaysian companies to build is a good example of infrastructure needs of Indonesia that can be partly met by Malaysia," he said at a press conference with Malaysian media at the end of his three-day working visit to Indonesia.

The visit is in conjunction with the 11th Annual Consultation between Najib and Indonesian President Joko Widodo and the 12th World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF).

He said Muslim nations should



Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** at the launch of the Global Entrepreneurship Community in Jakarta yesterday. With him are World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) Foundation chairman **Tun Musa Hitam** (right) and Treasury secretary-general and Malaysian Global Innovation & Creativity Centre chairman **Tan Sri Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah**. Pic by Aizuddin Saad

also enlarge the market for halal products and facilitate the acceptance of halal certification between countries.

"We should not allow bureaucracy to be a hindrance for halal products in Malaysia to be exported to other Muslim countries," said Najib, who is also WIEF patron.

Elaborating on his speech during the 12th WIEF opening session, where he called on Muslim nations to reject foreign intervention in their countries, the prime minister said Muslim nations did not need interference that would lead to instability or, more drastically, changes in regime that could have intended or unintended consequences.

"There are too many Muslim countries now in turmoil. Some have become failed states, economies have been crippled, sectarian violence has spread and led to the existence of groups like IS (Islamic State) that did not exist before," Najib said, adding that vi-

olent extremism was a threat to Muslim and non-Muslim nations.

On the current situation in Malaysia, where some quarters are happy with foreign intervention in domestic affairs, Najib said: "We don't want it, and we don't want our own people inviting foreign intervention."

"We should be the ones to determine our own future and direction."

During WIEF, Najib held bilateral meetings with Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon, Guinea President Alpha Conde, Sri Lanka Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister Jawed Al Anani, and Qatar Economy and Commerce Minister Sheikh Ahmed Jassin Al Thani.

He said the leaders welcomed Malaysian investments in their countries, including in mineral exploitation (Guinea) and infrastructure development (Qatar).

On the 11th Annual Consultation

with the Indonesian president, Najib said the talks were held in a friendly atmosphere and many issues were addressed.

"In terms of economy, Malaysia is the second largest investor in Indonesia last year, with US\$3.1 billion (RM12.5 billion).

"In terms of trade, bilateral trade is now about US\$15 billion and we hope in the next few years, bilateral cooperation can bring us close to the target of US\$30 billion in bilateral trade."

Najib said he was also grateful that UEM Group was given an opportunity to take part in the construction of the 116km Cikopo-Palimanan Expressway.

"This is one good example, and Joko acknowledged the capabilities of Malaysian government-linked companies to undertake the infrastructure projects awarded to us.

"There is a possibility that we will participate in more projects in the near future," he added.