

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	10 NOVEMBER 2016

Govt to introduce digital trade incentives

E-COMMERCE: Entrepreneurs must embrace digital world or risk becoming obsolete, says Najib

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INCENTIVES and comprehensive regulations will be introduced to ensure the success of the world's first digital free trade zone, scheduled to be launched here in March.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the government would discuss the matter with newly appointed digital economy adviser Jack Ma.

"We will have to discuss first the incentives that we can offer, the regulations and other things that can lure more entrepreneurs to participate," he said during a casual chat with some 3,000 participants at the Daya e-Usahawan conference

here yesterday.

Two participants, Umarul Ariffin Jeffri and Anis A'dilah Noor Azaman, had the opportunity to pose questions to Najib.

Umarul asked Najib on the outcome of his visit to China and meeting with Ma, who is also Alibaba Group executive chairman and an Internet entrepreneur.

Najib said digital entrepreneurs, or e-entrepreneurs, were now earning handsome incomes, with many earning more than other businesspeople and even elected representatives like him.

"E-commerce can help entrepreneurs record significant sales and a profit increase of between 40 and 50 per cent annually, compared with between four and five per cent for those in conventional business.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) chief executive officer, **Datuk Yasmin Mahmood** (left) after the launch of the **Daya e-Usahawan** conference at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday. Pic by Mohd Yusni Ariffin

"The sky is the limit, and I congratulate all of you on your success," he said before closing the two-day conference.

Present were Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Seri Salleh Said Keruak, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) chief executive officer Datuk Yasmin Mahmood.

Najib urged entrepreneurs, especially those from the younger generation, to embrace the digital world as those who fail to do so would become obsolete.

He reminded them that the digital economy would replace the conventional one, like how grocery shops

replaced hypermarkets, while online shopping platforms, such as Amazon, took over the role of bookstores.

"We are moving into the fourth industrial revolution, and I want all of us to become active participants, instead of spectators."

Asked what he would sell online if he were an e-entrepreneur, Najib said he would focus on Pekan's famous dishes, namely *puding diraja* and *opor daging*, besides the Royal Tenun of Pahang fabric that was being produced in the royal town.

"To become an e-entrepreneur, we must have the platform, knowledge and products. To succeed, we must have a strong determination."

Najib also launched the eU@Marketplace programme, which provides a platform for online entrepreneurs to expand their business overseas.

The programme is a collaboration between MDEC and seven online business platforms, namely Le-long.my, 11street.my, AVANA, EasyStore, AmaxMall, MyBazaar and Shopee.

Yasmin said there were 45,000 online entrepreneurs in the country, with 15,000 of them recording a total transaction of RM30 million.

She said MDEC had introduced the e-jutawan programme to groom successful e-entrepreneurs into millionaires.

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 - 10/11/2016