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PM: 2017 will be year of Internet economy

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PUTRAJAYA: Announcing that 2017 will be the year of Internet economy for the country, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has called on Malaysians to embrace, adapt to changes and explore new areas of growth to accelerate the economy.

He said to date, Malaysia's digital economy contribution to the Gross Domestic Product had already reached 17.8% in 2015.

"We have almost hit the 18.2% target which we set for 2020. In light of this achievement, we must continue the good work and strive for higher goals. With just a short three years away, we are confident of exceeding our target," he said in his closing remarks after chairing the 28th MSC Malaysia Implementation Council Meeting.

To ensure the success of Malaysia's agenda for Internet economy, Najib outlined five areas that act as catalysts – physical microcosms, risk capital funding, connectivity, talent and regulatory framework.

The Prime Minister took interest in the creation of physical microcosms – a cluster or community of digital hubs – where a new breed of Internet economy, mainly start-ups,



Meeting of minds: Najib (centre) with (from left) Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainuddin, Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, Datuk Seri Dr Salleh Said Keruak and Datuk Dr Mohd Azhar Yahaya during the launch of 28th MSC Malaysia Implementation Council Meeting in Putrajaya.

scale-ups and SMEs connects, converges, shares and creates ideas.

He said there was an urgency to create digital hubs to cater to the growing needs of these "born-digital" companies. He added that to encourage the setting up of these hubs, authorities would ensure a simpler and faster approval process to be done by the Communications and Multimedia Ministry.

"A new category under the MSC Foreign Knowledge Worker will also be introduced to complement the setting up of Malaysia Digital Hubs. The new category will be called the Tech Foreign Knowledge Entrepreneur that will facilitate the entry of global entrepreneurs into Malaysia," he added.

Saying that the country would need 20,000 data professionals and 2,000 data scientists by 2020, the Prime Minister said there were only some 350 data scientists at present and efforts would be doubled to develop data scientists via formal university initiatives and professional development.

Prayer times

ALOR SETAR		PENANG		KUALA LUMPUR	
Subuh	05:48	Subuh	05:48	Subuh	05:42
Zohor	13:07	Zohor	13:07	Zohor	13:02
Asar	16:24	Asar	16:23	Asar	16:18
Maghrib	19:05	Maghrib	19:06	Maghrib	19:02
Isyak	20:15	Isyak	20:16	Isyak	20:12