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LAUNCH OF INDIAN BLUEPRINT

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PM says no one should be left out in enjoying benefits of nation's development

CHENNAI

THE national blueprint specifically aimed at the development of the Indian community in Malaysia will be launched this month.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said a machinery would be put in place to implement the plan.

"No Malaysian should be left behind in enjoying the benefits of our country's development."

He said the blueprint was part of the government's commitment to bring about balance in the development of all races in Malaysia.

"We will set certain rules in place so that certain objectives are achieved within a specific timeframe," he told a crowd of about 200 Malaysians, including university students, at a gathering here yesterday.

Najib, at the opening of MIC's 70th annual assembly last October, had said the blueprint was necessary as his past initiatives for Indians had not effectively trickled down to the community's grassroots.

At the same event, Najib announced that medical graduates accepted as housemen on contract would receive backdated payment for their services once they were absorbed as permanent government servants.

The contract basis for house-



YUSHAIMI
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men, he said, would allow medical graduates to secure housemanship faster.

Najib had announced during the tabling of the 2017 Budget that the government would absorb more than 2,600 doctors awaiting housemanship into civil service under contract.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam lauded the move as many of the graduates were on the waiting list for up to a year due to limited permanent job posts.

He said the contract approach was much flexible and ensured the graduates could have better training to provide them with the expertise required.

At an earlier event, Najib urged Indian businessmen to capitalise on Malaysia's wealth of opportunities and conducive trading environment, and turn the country into a gateway to Asean and beyond.

Speaking to Indian captains of industry at the event organised by the Malaysian Associated Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MAICCI), Najib said there was enormous potential in investing and conducting business in Malaysia.

"With our highly diversified economy, strong manufacturing foundation, developed infrastructure and connectivity, proac-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at a roundtable meeting with India's captains of industry in Chennai yesterday. (Inset) Najib meeting Malaysian students at a gathering in Chennai. BERNAMA PIX



tive government policies and sound legal system, we believe there is enormous potential for further cooperation between India and Malaysia, and that our country can be your gateway for Asean and beyond.

"I urge all of you to take advantage of the wealth of opportunities offered by Malaysia. We are a friendly country with the highest percentage of the Indian diaspora outside India, with seven per cent of our population being of Indian origin. The vast majority of them are Tamils. The market is open for your business and ideas."

Najib also shared with the businessmen Malaysia's commitment to exploit the huge potential of e-commerce to enhance convergence in the global supply chain.

"Last month, Jack Ma of Alibaba and I launched the Digital Free Trade Zone, the first in the world.

"This initiative is part of our National e-Commerce strategy roadmap, and will offer a conducive environment for digital companies to carry out their businesses. There will be enormous opportunities for investors, and we would like to invite you to take advantage of this new growth area in Malaysia."

Last year, Malaysia was Chennai's ninth largest export destination and seventh largest source of imports. Overall, India

was Malaysia's 10th largest trading partner, accounting for 3.3 per cent, or US\$11.7 billion (RM51.8 billion), of Malaysia's total trade.

Main exports to India included palm oil and palm-based products, electrical and electronic products, crude petroleum, metal and chemical products.

The main imports from India were petroleum, agricultural, metal and chemical products, and machinery and equipment.

Malaysian companies, such as Tune Hotels, IJM Corp and UMW Corporation, have expanded their operations in India.