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# Opportunities aplenty in India

Bonanza time for Malaysians seeking business deals

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**CHENNAI:** With India's new initiatives of Make in India, Digital India, Start Up India, Smart Cities and Goods and Services Tax (GST) implementation taking shape, there are plenty of opportunities for Malaysian and Indian businesses.

Today, in the Tamil Nadu capital, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak will meet a group of Indian businessmen brought together by the Malaysian Associated Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MAICCI).

Twenty-five Chennai-based businessmen will hear first-hand from Najib what Malaysia has to offer.

Besides pitching for a bigger slice of India's economic cake, Najib is likely to touch on Malaysia's success stories and his vision for the future, including Iskandar Malaysia, the East Coast Economic Region (ECER) and the National Transformation 2050 (TN50) plan which will pave the way ahead for Malaysia.

Consortium of Indian Industries in Malaysia (CIIM) founder chairman Datuk Umang Sharma said Najib's visit could not have come at a better time.

"This is especially so from the business perspective. Indian businesses are mostly private-sector driven.

"It is bonanza time for Malaysian



**Rolling out the red carpet:** Najib accompanied by his wife Rosmah Mansor being welcomed by dignitaries upon arrival at the Chennai International Airport. — Bernama

entrepreneurs seeking to invest or do business in India," he added.

Initiated by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), CIIM is an industry apex body in Malaysia comprising Indian companies with investments from India.

Sharma, who was part of the CII's CEO delegation to Kuala Lumpur in 2011 when the landmark Malaysia-India Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (MICECA) was signed, said there were tremendous opportunities for Malaysian firms in states like Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

"Most of these states make their own decisions without any need for federal approval."

Sharma, who is the CEO of Bry-Air Malaysia, said attention should also

be given to India's second and third-tier cities.

"There is great potential for collaboration in technical know-how and investments in the smaller industrial cities, which have SME entrepreneurs.

"The cost of doing business is also far lower. To really engage the businesses of both countries, the SME sector is of utmost importance."

Sharma called for more air connectivity between both countries.

"On many occasions, we have had to travel via Singapore or Bangkok since no seats were available on limited flights on the KL-Delhi-KL sector.

"Ease of getting visas and faster processing for Indian nationals, especially for the ICT sector, will also greatly help," he added.

Besides Chennai and New Delhi, Najib, will also travel to Jaipur in Rajasthan state where infrastructure development is big.

The Prime Minister was hosted last night to a reception by Acting Tamil Nadu Governor Vidhyasagar Rao at his official residence.

Talk is abuzz in this cinema-crazed city that Tamil movie mega star Rajinikanth, who shot parts of his hit movie *Kabali* in Malaysia last year, will call on Najib.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is preparing to roll out the red carpet for Najib in Delhi.

Modi is upbeat with his BJP party securing a massive victory in the recent high-stakes assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, India's largest state.