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# 'We have to face five challenges'

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## Najib outlines quest for a better future

**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysia has to face five challenges in its quest to provide a better future for its citizens, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

In his 2017 Hari Raya address, the Prime Minister said they were geopolitics, peace and security, economy, placing people's interests first, and the future through National Transformation 2050 (TN50).

"Malaysia is facing a serious challenge of a new world of geopolitical risks, including the crisis involving the Islamic nations of the Gulf, North Korea's nuclear programme and the implications of Brexit.

"Of course, all these developments have to be examined carefully because if the crises cannot be resolved immediately, they can undermine the prosperity of the nations in the region and the world," he said.

On the question of peace and security, Najib said there had been numerous cases of explosions and bombings in public places worldwide by terrorist and extremist groups in the past few weeks.

Among them were the attacks in Manchester and London, explosion in Jakarta, car bomb explosion in Kabul and a fierce battle in Marawi in the Philippines.

"I urge all the people in Malaysia to avoid being influenced by the ideology of extremism and terrorism, such as those of the Islamic State, which had misinterpreted the concept of jihad in Islam.

"We should avoid any threat of external elements which may threaten national security, because Islam is a religion of peace and prosperity," he said, calling on Muslims to

screen information, threats of defamation and false accusations.

As for the national economy, Najib said despite global uncertainties, the economy grew at 5.6% in the first quarter of 2017, compared to 4.5% in the fourth quarter of 2016.

For the first time, the value of exports reached RM80bil in March, with exports having grown by 24% to RM82.63bil, the highest monthly export achieved so far.

Najib said the Government would continue to lead Malaysia in implementing value-added economic activities to ensure it remained competitive in the global economy.

On the need to put people's interests first, he said the Government had channelled various forms of assistance and initiatives such as the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) and affordable housing to ease the cost of living.

Najib said the contemporary world was on the verge of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

"In moving towards TN50, I would like to see the birth of a credible generation par excellence with individual, communal and national resilience.

"At the same time, I pray we will be successful in buttressing a prosperous Malaysia in the ranks of the world's 20 most advanced countries," he said.

He also extended his appreciation to national servicemen and security personnel for their sacrifices guarding the borders and at the Esszone.

Najib also urged Malaysians to strengthen solidarity and association, set aside all differences and enjoy the existing harmony under the 1Malaysia bonds of brotherhood.