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# PM: IRB BACKBONE OF GOVT, ECONOMY

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It's a revenue source, enabling country to provide education, healthcare facilities and public amenities

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**T**HE Inland Revenue Board (IRB) has been tasked with ramping up efforts to tackle issues that could allow an underground economy (unrecorded and untaxed economic activities) to flourish.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said loopholes could be plugged through an efficient tax collection system and deterring those who refused to pay their taxes.

"The element of fear is that no one can escape from paying taxes," said Najib, who is also finance minister, at the 2017 Revenue Day celebration at Menara Hasil here last night.

Present were the prime minister's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Treasury Secretary-General Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah, Deputy Finance Ministers Datuk Othman Aziz and Datuk Lee Chee Leong, and IRB chief executive officer Datuk Sabin Samitah.

Najib warned of the impact of low-revenue collection on Malaysia.

"Smaller revenue will be bad for us, as had happened in some countries in Europe due to a poor



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the 2017 Revenue Day celebration at Menara Hasil in Cyberjaya yesterday. Flanking him are Treasury Secretary-General Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah (left) and Inland Revenue Board chief executive officer Datuk Sabin Samitah. PIC BY AHMAD IRHAM MOHD NOOR

tax-collection system and their people refusing to pay taxes."

He said with high revenue, better development and services could be rendered to the people.

"We need revenue to provide the best services to the people as they expect it from us.

"I look at IRB as the backbone of the government and the country's economy."

Najib said that for the government to continue providing quality education, good healthcare fa-

cilities and public amenities, it would need strong revenue.

He praised IRB for its RM114 billion collection recorded last year.

Earlier, Sabin said IRB could meet the target of RM127.7 billion in revenue collection this year by adopting measures, including strengthening the leadership at each level and stressing on an excellent work culture.

He said IRB had put in place several tax strategies, one of which was to establish good net-

working and strategic cooperation with agencies such as Bank Negara Malaysia, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, Customs Department and Malaysia Companies Commission.

Earlier in **Kuala Lumpur**, Bernama reported that Najib approved an allocation of RM200,000 for the repair of the Gurdwara Sahib Kuyow in Sungai Besi, which was damaged in a storm last June.

Najib said the harmony among

people of various races was a pillar of national unity and integration.

"We have to practise mutual respect among all communities, regardless of their religion, culture or skin colour because we are Malaysians and are committed to our country."

He said the gurdwara, once renovated, would help the estimated 500 members of the Sikh community in the vicinity to conduct their religious activities.