

**Malaysia Can Play Important Part In Creating New Growth Corridors, Says Najib Bernama
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PUTRAJAYA, Jan 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysia can play an important part in expediting creation of a new growth corridor, encompassing China through Southeast Asia and India to the Middle East, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Wednesday.

In stressing the importance of the new corridor, he said the China-Asean-India-Middle East partnership would be able to create huge business and investment opportunities.

He said the launch of the Global Business Council was timely as it would be an effective means of bringing together business leaders and entrepreneurs not just from China, India, Asean and the Middle East but also from the Chinese diaspora around the world.

"This is our time and this is our opportunity. So let us capitalise on this momentous occasion in the world economic history and to ensure the 21st history is a century that is led by Asia," he said when speaking at a special conferment ceremony and launching of the World Chinese Economic Forum's Global Business Council.

Najib was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award by the World Chinese Economic Forum adviser, Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek, and the forum's patron, Tan Sri Lee Kim Yew, at the event.

Najib was conferred the award in recognition of his bold measures and contributions to transform Malaysia, especially his ambitious economic transformation programme.

The prime minister said that in the current economic climate and with the Eurozone still in a precarious financial situation, "it falls to this part of the world -- the East -- particularly to China, India, Asean and the Gulf states -- to fuel the global recovery and to propel world economic growth.

"I'm not someone who is advocating the kind of age-old rivalry between the East and West but rather we should complement each other, but given the situation that we find ourselves today, Asia must lead the way," he said.

The Global Business Council, expected to further link business leaders and entrepreneurs from China, Southeast Asia, Australia and Europe, will also provide another platform for business ideas interchange, sharing of experiences and strengthening of relationship between countries in the regions.

"Open not only for the Chinese businessmen but for business personnel across all ethnic and nationality background, the council will also promote global corporate citizenship, corporate governance, business ethics and green growth," he said.

The Global Business Council will be headed by John So, the longest-serving Melbourne mayor.

Members of the council's International Advisory Panel include AirAsia's chief executive officer Tan Sri Tony Fernandes, Public Bank co-chairman Tan Sri Thong Yaw Hong and other

dignitaries from participating countries.

The Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (ASLI) will provide the secretariat support for the Global Business Council here, with the other branches to be established in China, Hong Kong, Europe, the United States and Australia.

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