

MJIIT symbol of growing Japan-Malaysia relationship – Najib
MySinChew.com
June 02, 2012

KUALA LUMPUR, June 1 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today hailed the establishment of the Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT), saying it reflected a potent symbol of Malaysia's rich and burgeoning relationship with Japan.

He also said that it showed confidence in Japanese technology and work ethics and the desire to gain a window onto the Japanese way of life.

It was also a commitment to providing affordable, accessible, Japanese-style education in a Malaysian setting and at the same time creating a cutting-edge hub for research and development, he said.

"It is a partnership that I hope will see Japanese innovation and entrepreneurial skills inculcated into a new breed of Malaysian engineers - young people with the skills and talent to contribute to the sustainable growth of our nation in line with the 1Malaysia vision," he said in his speech before opening the MJIIT building in the campus of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) Kuala Lumpur, here.

Also present were Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Japan Dr Yukio Hatoyama, UTM Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Zaini Ujang and Japan's Ambassador to Malaysia Shigeru Nakamura.

Najib said that with Malaysia fast-emerging as a centre for international education, it was hoped that the MJIIT would serve as a platform for introducing students right across the Asean region and, indeed the world, to a Japanese-style engineering education.

"I am confident that, over time, MJIIT will grow to become a centre of excellence to rival that on offer anywhere in Asia. For there can be no doubt that MJIIT has an important part to play in helping Malaysia take our place at the heart of the global economy," he said.

Najib said he looked forward to MJIIT inspiring future generations to follow their dreams, unleash their imagination and become world leaders in their fields.

"To paraphrase MJIIT's own guiding principle, it is an institution that aspires to engineer the nation with the precision needed to guide us towards sustainable development and growth," he said.

The idea of setting up such an institution was initially conceived by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Japan's former prime minister Junichiro Koizumi in November 2001.

Last month, Malaysia received Japanese Yen loan of RM250 million for laboratory equipment and, at the same time, the cabinet approved a RM100-million allocation for each year for the next seven years to MJIIT.

MJIIT has embarked on a joint programme development, both at the undergraduate (Bachelor's (Hons) degree in Mechanical Precision Engineering, Bachelor's (Hons) degree

in Electronic Systems Engineering) and postgraduate levels (MPhil and PhD degrees in specific areas of research).

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