

**PM: There's a gap between perception and reality**  
**TheStarOnline**  
**June 05, 2012**  
**By ZUHRIN AZAM AHMAD**

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia is a far better country than has been portrayed by certain quarters, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The Prime Minister said there was a gap between the perception and reality of Malaysia, which was why many foreign visitors were surprised when they came to the country.

"In some countries, the reality is worse than the perception but in Malaysia, the perception is worse than the reality.

"There are many indicators that provide a clear picture of the nation's success that have been achieved through various government initiatives," he said when addressing the Prime Minister's Department's monthly gathering at Dataran Perdana here yesterday.

Najib said two US senators who visited Malaysia last week were among those impressed with what they saw and described Malaysia as a success story.

He added: "Both of them (John McCain and Joseph Lieberman) who had run for president said the United States itself is facing many problems and is improving its system of democracy.

"They acknowledged that their country's elections' results were once decided by the Supreme Court.

"This differs from the situation in Malaysia where elections are well managed and the results are known on the night of polling."

Najib urged Malaysians to work hard and not be easily contented with achievements, adding that they should always challenge themselves to do better.

Later in Johor Baru, Najib said the group which conducted illegal demonstrations in Mecca and Medina carrying the Bersih 3.0 banner had caused problems between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

He said that although only a few people had gathered wearing yellow T-shirts and carrying Bersih 3.0 banners, the matter had been taken seriously by the Saudi Arabian government.

"They are the safekeepers of the Holy Lands and it is a serious matter to them. Just imagine if citizens of every country facing internal problems decided to vent their frustrations in the Holy Land.

"This will definitely affect the purity of the land itself," he said in his speech at the opening ceremony of the 55th national-level Tilawah Al-Quran competition held at Persada Convention Centre.

Najib said it was strange for the group to use the Holy Land to vent their political frustrations.

"Their actions have tainted our country's peaceful image," he added.

Copyright © 1995-2012 Star Publications (M) Bhd

Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/6/5/nation/11419027&sec=nation>