

**Many Marvel At Malaysia's Success, Says Najib
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PUTRAJAYA, June 4 (Bernama) -- Many foreigners who visit Malaysia are surprised to find that their perceptions belie the reality on the ground, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said many indicators in the country provide a clear picture of the nation's success, achieved through the various initiatives of the government.

"For some countries, the reality is worse than the perception but for Malaysia the perception is worse than the reality," he said when addressing the monthly assembly of the Prime Minister's Department at Dataran Perdana, here.

Najib said two United States senators who visited Malaysia recently were impressed with what they saw and described Malaysia as a success story.

Senators John McCain and Joseph Lieberman, both of whom had run for president, said the United States itself was improving its system of democracy, and acknowledged that their country's election result was once determined by the Supreme Court than the ballot box.

Najib said this differed from the situation in Malaysia where elections were well managed and the results were known on the night of polling.

The prime minister said Malaysians should be confident that they were on the right track, but added that they should not feel satisfied with what little they had achieved.

Instead, they should take up the challenge to do their best so that the country could see bigger achievements in a short span of time, he said.

He said such programmes as the Government Transformation Programme (GTP), Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), New Economic Model (NEM) and Rural Transformation Centre (RTC) implemented by the government had produced direct and indirect results which had benefited the whole country.

Najib also said that strengthening of the construction sector by more than 15 per cent contributed to an economic growth rate of 4.7 per cent in the first quarter of this year.

Najib said the country had no choice but to build domestic and national economic resilience to face the uncertainty in the world economic scenario so as to maintain steady economic growth.

"We have to find resources and new ideas to increase our income. We can learn from the countries of the Eurozone which faced severe economic pressures, by finding out what they failed to do," he said.

Najib said the government exercised responsibility by returning to the people the added revenue it garnered instead of merely promising something it could not deliver or which would harm the country.

He referred to the promises made by certain quarters, such as to reduce fuel price, abolish

the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) loans, abolish toll and raise the quantum of minimum wage.

He said one did not have to be an intellectual to know that all these could not be implemented, but for those who made the promises what mattered most was to come to power.

Najib also said that the government was looking into improving the country's frontline services, manned by officers from such departments as Customs and Immigration whom visitors will see first upon entering the country.

He said the focus, among others, would be on the aspect of interaction between these officers and the visitors.

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