

**Education Transformation Needed To Meet Malaysia's High Aspirations - Najib  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 12 (Bernama) -- Malaysia requires a transformation of its entire education system, lifting achievement for all students in order to meet its high aspirations, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said the country could not stand still amid an increasingly competitive global environment.

"Rather than simply adding staff and facilities, there's now a need to understand and improve the dynamics of the teaching and learning process," he said.

"That's why we've launched the Education Blueprint," he said in the latest posting on his 1Malaysia blogsite.

Yesterday, Najib launched the preliminary Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 which provides a comprehensive plan for a rapid and sustainable transformation of the country's education system.

"From how we approach student learning, the way we recruit, train and reward our teachers and principals right through to how the Ministry of Education itself operates, it lays out a process for that change," he said of the document.

Najib said that while the targets set out were ambitious, they were entirely achievable.

They include ensuring universal enrolment from pre-school to upper secondary education in 10 years; halving the achievement gaps between the rich and the poor, urban and rural, and between the states that form Malaysia in eight years; rising from the bottom-third to the top-third of countries in international assessments like PISA and TIMSS in 15 years; and building an education system that gives children an appreciation of their unique identity as Malaysians.

Every effort, he said, must be directed towards improving student outcomes.

"Transforming the education system will not be easy and we're likely to encounter a number of challenges along the way," he cautioned.

"But rest assured that not only are the government and the Education Ministry committed to delivering on these goals, I'm also personally committed," the prime minister said.

Najib said that everybody -- from individual parents to members of the local community to the private sector -- had a role to play and a personal stake in improving the country's education system.

"So, God willing, let's take this exciting, challenging and -- most importantly -- necessary journey together, as one nation," Najib said.

He noted that thanks to the thousands of dedicated teachers, principals, administrators as well as officers and staff at the Education Ministry, the Malaysian education system had been the bedrock of the country's development.

"It goes without saying that education is an essential part of anyone's personal development and also a major contributor to the development of a nation's social and economic capital.

"It inspires creativity and fosters innovation; provides our youth with the necessary skills to be able to compete in the modern labour market; and is a key driver of growth in the economy," he said.

Najib observed the need to ensure that the education system continued to progress in tandem as the government put in place measures under the New Economic Model, Economic Transformation Programme and the Government Transformation Programme.

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