

**Malaysia Undergoing Challenging Phase To Achieve Developed Nation Status -
Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Malaysia is now undergoing the most challenging period in the final phase to achieve the developed nation status by the year 2020.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia had a clear strategy and direction to go through the challenge that would elevate the country to the desired position.

"We know how to get there there. But we need to work hard. Think creatively in order to get there.

"We must renew our determination and resolve, and with the grace of Allah, this dream and aspiration can be achieved," he said when opening the 'Ekspo MalaysiaKu' at the Putra World Trade Centre, here Friday.

Also present were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Nor Mohamed Yakcop and Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ali Hamsa.

The three-day exposition with the theme "Tanah Air yang Dihormati" (Our Respected Country) is organised by the Economic Planning Unit.

Recalling the country's development in the context of economic growth, Najib said Malaysia had undergone three major phases, namely, the phase to realise the essence of independence, the industrial era development phase implemented through the New Economic Policy, and the third phase under the new economic model, where the Economic Transformation Plan and the Government Transformation Plan (GTP) were introduced to drive national development.

The Prime Minister said the country had achieved much success beginning as an agricultural nation which was leading in rubber and palm oil production.

"Today, we have sectors which have achieved global recognition such as oil and gas, real estate, Islamic banking and financial centre, manufacturer of products such as gloves, and

the latest, we have emerged as the third largest IPO (initial public offering) hub in the world," he said.

Najib said these achievements could be realised because Malaysia had strong political leadership that was effective and had the wisdom to make decisions that were ahead of time and received the support of the civil servants.

"These two elements formed the foundation for our success," he said.

In order for the country's success and development to move in tandem, Najib said emphasis was also given to the people's well-being index.

This was implemented by making improvements to sectors that were close to the people's heart including services, public transport, pollution, solid waste and crime prevention, he said.

"We are not a government that is static in terms of approach and thinking.

"We are not a government that doesn't want to change. We can change, we can reform and bring real progress to the country," he said, adding that creative thinking was crucial in taking the country to greater heights.

"That journey will be successful...but we need your support and mandate when the time comes," he added.

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