

**PM: Reforms we initiated are spot on**  
**New Straits Times**  
**15 January 2013**  
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**VINDICATION: 'New laws reflect maturity'**

KUALA LUMPUR: THE rally which took place here last Saturday is testimony to the effectiveness of the newly passed Peaceful Assembly Act, Datuk Seri Najib Razak said yesterday.

The prime minister also thanked the authorities and organisers for respecting the spirit of the act.

"I would like to congratulate the authorities on their professionalism. As for the opposition, I do not agree with them but I would also like to thank them for respecting the law.

"What happened shows that the islah or reforms that we have initiated are spot on," he said in his opening speech at the Law Reform for Safety and Human Rights Conference here yesterday.

It was reported that thousands had taken part in the gathering, dubbed "Kuala Lumpur Rally", to voice their concern over various issues. The rally, backed by the opposition, was also incident-free, unlike previous rallies in the city in the past year.

Najib said the government realised that laws pertaining to public freedom and the country's safety needed to be in tune with democratic processes and international laws, but they also needed to be modelled after our norms and culture.

"The introduction of new laws and the improvement made to current laws reflect our status as a mature society and nation."

Among the laws that were done away with by the Najib administration are the Internal Security Act 1960, Banishment Act 1959 and Restricted Residence Act 1933.

Najib noted that the government was always open to different ideas and opinions.

He stressed that the government no longer held on to the principle that the "government knows best", but encouraged an open and innovative society.

"The government is committed to transformations, whether politically or economically.

"Being static or in a state of regression is not an option."

Speaking on the same issue, Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said he was thankful that there were no untoward incidents during the rally.

"I am glad that everything was conducted in an orderly manner and would like to congratulate the police for a job well done," he said at the event.

The three-day conference, which ends tomorrow, aims to clarify the recent legal reforms in Malaysia.

The conference is jointly organised by the Attorney-General's Chambers, Razak School of Government and Malaysian Institute of Translation and Books.

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