

**Najib An Outstanding Leader, Says Economist**  
**Bernama**  
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**By Tengku Noor Shamsiah Tengku Abdullah**

JOHOR BAHRU, April 25 (Bernama) -- An economist and financial expert, Professor Datuk Dr Sudin Haron has described Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak as an outstanding leader with the right strategic approach towards steering Malaysia to greater heights of success.

As such he added, Najib deserves to receive the mandate from the people to lead the nation in the upcoming general election.

Sudin, a director of the Islamic Wealth Centre, University Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu and Board Member of Malaysia Wakaf Foundation, said the prime minister's Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) had produced many positive results.

"The 12 National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs) at the heart of the ETP have the potential to directly and materially contribute a quantifiable amount of economic growth to the Malaysian economy," he told Bernama.

"Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from RM630 billion in 2009 to RM749 billion in 2012. Similarly, Gross National Income (GNI) improved from RM605 billion to RM698 billion during the same period.

"Foreign direct investment (FDI) also increased tremendously from RM5 billion in 2009 to RM37 billion for 2011," Sudin added.

Also, president of the International Association of Islamic Wealth, he noted that the arrival of foreign tourists in Malaysia had increased from 24.6 million in 2009 to 25 million for 2012.

"Under Najib's administration, more employment opportunities have also been created.

"For example, more than 300,000 new jobs were created in 2011 and another 800,000 for 2012," he said.

According to Sudin, data from the World Bank showed Najib had also helped elevate Malaysia to a higher ranking in a number of areas when compared to other countries.

"I note that Malaysia was ranked first in terms of the easiest country to get credit, 4th as a country that protects foreign investors, 11th position for cross-border trades and 12th in terms of business viability.

"He has introduced many initiatives which give direct impact to the lower income group. All these are within the 1Malaysia concept," he said.

Sudin said under the Najib administration, there was more political freedom.

"He has abolished the Internal Security Act and amended the National Higher Education Act.

"I do believe under Najib's leadership, Malaysia has been progressing very well and in line

with the Vision 2020. Therefore, people must continue to support his leadership," he added.

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