

**Important To Uphold Laws That Protect Citizen's Rights - Najib  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said it was important for Malaysia to uphold laws which protected the fundamental rights of citizens and acknowledged present-day realities when enacting new laws.

"And, it is crucial for the government to act firmly against those who threatened the peace and harmony of our country, which our forefathers so painstakingly built up over the years," said the prime minister at the Middle Temple Annual Conference 2013 here Thursday.

He also noted that the government, for instance, had placed great emphasis on protecting the environment by way of enacting laws of the Environment Quality Act to ensure that environmentally-sensitive projects obtained appropriate government approval.

Najib also said that it was important that our legal system kept up with the aspirations of the country, to attain developed-nation status by the year 2020.

"That is why, Malaysia has taken important steps to create a modern legal system that facilitates economic growth and protects the interest and needs of the people," he said.

Najib also contended that the government had liberalised the legal industry by amending the Legal Profession Act to allow licensed foreign lawyers to practise in Malaysia.

The opening up of the country's legal market was important for Malaysia's continued economic growth and development, and "Malaysia is now a capital-exporting country, involved in numerous cross-border ventures which require the expertise, not only of Malaysian lawyers but also foreign lawyers with specific areas of expertise, he said.

Najib also expressed great pleasure that the Middle Temple had chosen Kuala Lumpur as the venue to hold its conference, as it underscored the strong relationship between the Inns of Court and Malaysia.

He noted that many judges, advocates, solicitors and even politicians were graduates from the Inns of Court.

"My late father, Tun Abdul Razak, was also a barrister and bencher of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn," said the prime minister.

The two-day conference was organised by the Middle Temple alumni which gathered local and foreign legal practitioners, including judges and Malaysian Bar members.

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