

**English Translation Of 'Amanat Merdeka' Text Of Speech Delivered By PM
Bernama
August 30, 2014**

[Following is the English translation of the full text of speech delivered by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak as the 57th National Day address at the Dewan Tunku Abdul Rahman of the Malaysian Tourism Centre (Matic) in Kuala Lumpur tonight (Aug 30).]

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam Sejahtera and Salam 1Malaysia, Beloved Malaysians,

1. Alhamdulillah, praise and thanks be to Allah (God), with His permission once again, wherever we may be in this country, we continue to be protected in peace, to celebrate the anniversary of our independence.
2. Unlike in previous years, when the message was recorded and broadcast over the television, tonight I have chosen to speak live to hundreds of people present on the eve of independence, to express the spirit of patriotism and the burning desire of the nation's struggle, from eye to eye, from heart to heart, especially for all of you who are here representing the people of Malaysia.
3. The reality is that every independence begins with a noble struggle and unparalleled sacrifice, especially by the Malay Rulers and palace, political leaders and the people.
4. In this respect, if we look at the history of our nation, we were colonialised for four and a half centuries, beginning with the fall of the Melaka Malay Sultanate at the hands of the Portuguese in 1511 until the British administration. The colonialists came in succession to reap the benefits and to suppress the natives, up until independence on August 31, 1957.
5. Looking back at history, everyone must remember that this country originated as the Federation of Malay States, and subsequently united with Sabah and Sarawak.
6. With reference to this episode, we hear rumblings and unsavoury voices which question why the date of the formation of Malaysia is not the same as the date of independence; why Sept 16, when in the peninsula, it's Aug 31.
7. In this matter, we have to study what was really worked out by the special commission which was assigned to conduct a referendum among the people of Sabah and Sarawak in the process of the formation of Malaysia at that time.
8. For the information of the public, the later date came about due to technical reasons, because the Cobbold Commission had to wait for verification from the United Nations on the majority agreement through a referendum before finalising its report. As such, Sept 16 was fixed as the day for the formation of Malaysia.

Beloved Malaysians,

9. Going from there, this year, we celebrate the 57th anniversary of independence and the 51st year of Sabah and Sarawak having been with us as one Malaysia. Long live Malaysia, long live Malaysia!

Beloved Malaysians,

10. As such, we are thankful for the common history between the peninsula and Sabah and Sarawak, which are separated by the South China Sea, as well as the bond of brotherhood of all Malaysians from Arau in Perlis to Semporna in Sabah and Ulu Lachau in Sarawak, that cannot be broken; in fact, God willing, it will be strengthened further.

11. Hence, as soon as the 13th general election was over, to symbolise the new mandate received by the government, I did not hesitate to appoint a number of ministers and deputy ministers from Sabah and Sarawak in respect of the support given by our brethren there to the Barisan Nasional (BN).

12. Now more than one year has passed. The number of representatives from Sabah and Sarawak in the government is an important yardstick in determining the next course for our beloved Malaysia.

13. I had stressed in my major addresses over the past more than one year that the present government has a huge responsibility in prioritising the interests of the people, particularly the Malay and Bumiputera communities, Muslims and non-Muslims, who represent more than 70 per cent of the Malaysian people, by 2020.

14. So, whatever the opposition tries to do though incitement and accusations, we are steadfast in our agenda to empower the people.

Beloved Malaysians,

15. Recalling our pre-independence history, the complexities surrounding our quest for Merdeka had caused some apprehension among certain quarters on our choice to do it our way. But it can be seen that we have turned our plural society into an asset for prosperity and an ingredient of success at the highest level.

Beloved Malaysians,

16. We plan and leave the rest to God; this country had faced and weathered numerous challenges. Yet our Merdeka heart, Merdeka soul and Merdeka spirit shine through, such that we are able to rise above all and acquire success, our own way. Well done, Malaysians! Well done, Malaysians!

17. For instance, when the nation gained independence, the poverty rate was over 60 per cent. It dropped to 1.7 per cent in 2012, where hardcore poverty was almost eradicated.

18. When I took over the leadership and administration of the country in 2009, the 1Malaysia concept of 'People First, Performance Now' was introduced, based on the National Transformation Policy or NTP. The framework encompasses the bigger national transformation agenda, which began with the Government Transformation Programme or GTP, Economic Transformation Programme or ETP, Political Transformation Programme or PTP, Community Transformation Programme or CTP, Social Transformation Programme or STP and Fiscal Transformation Programme or FTP.

19. The results, in five years, were numerous achievements, which have been acknowledged internationally and which I have outlined in my speeches and reports.

20. The national economy showed a very encouraging trend in the second quarter of 2014 with a gross domestic product growth of 6.4 per cent, compared to 4.5 per cent in the corresponding period in 2013, the highest ever recorded since the fourth quarter of 2012. This makes our achievement the highest among the Asean countries for the first half of 2014.

21. In conclusion, we have come a long way and have grown over time from an agricultural country over six decades ago to become a developing nation; we are now at the curve to achieving the status of a high-come developed nation, probably earlier than anticipated.

Beloved Malaysians,

22. What is important is that we cannot be complacent at all; for all that we have been achieved today did not come about by sheer coincidence or by itself. All these were attained with the noble efforts of our past leaders and our founding fathers up to the era of the present government.

23. In fact, in our endeavour to be a noble and successful nation, we have surmounted all kinds of turbulence by seeing them as challenges. Evidently, Malaysia was able to face and overcome these challenges in our own way and approach.

24. We were able to emerge from turmoil and combat these challenges, among them, the Emergency, the eradication of Communist guerilla attacks, the 1969 May 13 tragedy, and the restructuring of the country's society and economy, to become a respected, modern, progressive Islamic country emulated by other countries of the world.

25. In this regard, can we still remember the armed intrusion in Lahad Datu, Sabah, last year? An incident where our soldiers had sacrificed their lives? But, thank God, the incursion was successfully repelled by our security forces, and the area is now under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Sabah Security Command or ESSCom.

26. In this connection, we feel uneasy and are puzzled by the attitude of some irresponsible quarters out to create trouble by disputing the government's recognition of our soldiers and security forces.

27. What the government wants to explain is that we should not be making comparisons of the recognition accorded to victims of the MH17 tragedy and question why was such high-level honours were not accorded to the fallen soldiers and security forces of the Lahad Datu incident.

28. This is surely incitement aimed at distortion with malice. Clearly, I would like to once again stress that the services of all our national warriors will be held in high regard and they will be remembered for their deeds.

Beloved Malaysians,

29. It has become common and prevalent in life that we face all kinds of challenges. This year, several unexpected tragedies occurred which brought Malaysians grief, but we must remain bold in charting our path with even greater challenges to come.

30. This means we must face them calmly and boldly and strive as hard as we can to manage the crises which happen.

31. The year 2014 has been a most trying one; we were shocked by the tragedy of the missing Flight MH370 and the crash of Flight MH17 in eastern Ukraine. Both the aircraft were owned by our national airlines or MAS.

32. It remains fresh in my memory how we faced the challenging and difficult time. To date, I have succeeded in negotiating for three agreements with the separatists controlling the area:

First: To remove all the remains of the MH17 victims out of the crash site.

Second: To obtain the two black boxes for handing over only to the Government of Malaysia.

33. Additionally, in facing such a critical moment, all negotiations were conducted with caution. Sometimes, we must work quietly in the service of a better outcome, especially in dealing with a separatist leader, so as to ensure that the victims can be brought home to be accorded proper honours and a decent burial.

34. Therefore, in my opinion, every test that befalls the nation is none other than a preparation to test our resilience and guidance towards Malaysia's progress to the top.

35. These two tragic events are expected to bring about a significant change in global aviation. These are extraordinary and rare incidents. I understand that this has been a difficult year for MAS.

36. Therefore, to continue to operate, we do not have much of a choice, but to undertake a comprehensive restructuring of MAS. I urge all Malaysians to provide support for MAS'

announced 12-point Recovery Plan.

37. Hopefully, all the bitter and sweet memories that we have gone through together as a nation are recorded in the nation's history.

38. The fact is that we do need a competitive national airline capable of taking commercial decisions without having to sacrifice the welfare of employees as well as being economically viable.

39. Hopefully, with the support of all quarters, over the next few years, God willing, we want to continue seeing Malaysia Airlines flying high.

Beloved Malaysians,

40. Let's instil the spirit of patriotism with love for the motherland. Indeed, independence portrays much meaning and understanding for all of us as a free people.

41. Let's ignite the flame of independence by waving and raising the Jalur Gemilang across the country. Certainly, we all understand perfectly the value and pride in seeing the national flag fluttering gloriously.

Beloved Malaysians,

42. Yes ... it's true ... it's true ... many people tell me that we are a small country, but with a big heart. Thus, in order to realise that dream, I want to put forth three important independence messages in order for our nation to continue to compete in the international arena, namely:

43. First Independence Message: Strengthening the solidarity of Malaysians in the face of bitter challenges, trials and tribulations, including being united in grief.

44. For example, the first batch of 20 victims of the Flight MH17 tragedy, whose remains were brought back on Aug 22, and the subsequent victims, whose remains arrived in stages, were accorded military honours never ever accorded to civilians in the country's history.

45. Besides that, we were witness to how Malaysians were united in grief. We observed one minute of silence nationwide in solidarity and in the spirit of togetherness in the hope of building one nation, 1Malaysia.

46. In fact, ladies and gentlemen, we showed unity on the Day of Mourning nationwide, and we will continue that spirit of oneness in times of comfort and hardship.

47. Second Independence Message: Nurture confidence that we can achieve whatever ambitions as a nation if there exists unity. Meaning to say, a bright future will belong to us all if we have steadfast efforts and live in partnership in the pursuit of a noble intention.

48. Indeed, administrating a country is a complex undertaking, unlike that of an ordinary organisation. As the leaders of the government of today, my colleagues and I will continue making the best decisions for Malaysians based on the government's needs, requirements and capabilities.

49. Third Independence Message: Bequeathing a Malaysia that is prosperous and peaceful. Meaning, whatever the grief or trials, we will continue to move forward and build a glorious Malaysia for the future of our children and grandchildren. Let us strive to achieve success for our future generations for the next 50 years, or more than that ... 100 years to come.

Beloved Malaysians,

50. Lastly, I urge all of you, especially those present tonight, to rise ... to rise ... and, together with me, place your right hand over your left chest as a symbol of where your heart and feelings lie. Say ... say ... that...here is where love begins, a love sublime and pure for the motherland, and here we ensure that it continues to bloom in the heart as one spirit of patriotism. Indeed, we are all the bridge of the heritage.

51. Come on ... Come on ... Come on ... let's proclaim the sacred word MERDEKA, ... MERDEKA, ... MERDEKA, ...

Thank you, Wabillahi Taufiq Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

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