

## **#ASEAN: Highlights Of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's Speech At The Opening Of 26th Asean Summit**

**Bernama**

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KUALA LUMPUR, April 27 (Bernama) -- Following are the highlights of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's speech at the opening of the 26th ASEAN Summit at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, here Monday.

\* The establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community and formulating the next ten-year roadmap were two crucial undertakings that marked 2015 as a 'milestone' in ASEAN's history.

\* ASEAN members had worked together, such as the recent evacuation of citizens trapped in the turmoil in Yemen.

\* ASEAN is urged to find ways to become more 'politically cohesive' during Malaysia's chairmanship so that the community can position itself as a 'third force' in the region.

\* ASEAN has the third largest workforce in the world and a largely youthful, talented and increasingly skilled population of over 600 million people.

\* ASEAN's burgeoning middle class makes the grouping as one of the most potent and dynamic of regions - leading one publication to ask last week if ASEAN was Asia's hottest investment."

\* Predictions that ASEAN's combined GDP will rise from US\$ 2.5 trillion currently to US\$ 4 trillion by 2020, and that ASEAN is set to be the world's fourth-largest economy by 2050.

\* This is ASEAN's time. Let us work together to ensure that the Asian Century is also the ASEAN Century."

\* Stressing the importance of Malaysia's vision of creating a 'People-Centred ASEAN' that is sustainable and inclusive.

\* "A People-Centred ASEAN is one in which citizens feel that they are not just part of ASEAN. But that regardless of where they are - from rice farmers, to forex dealers, halal business owners, fishermen and electronics engineers - our citizens actually feel that they are ASEAN, and its future is their future. In order to achieve that, ASEAN must engage with and constantly listen to them. We must make sure that those ties that bind - and the great idea that is ASEAN - are a tangible, personal reality for all of our citizens."

\* The Prime Minister spoke of the necessity of putting forward 'a positive narrative of moderation, of hope and of peace', and welcomed the expected adoption of the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates to ensure the region was spared the threat posed by extremism.

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