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Najib-Islam

WORLD RECOGNISES MALAYSIA AS ISLAMIC COUNTRY, SAYS NAJIB

PEKAN, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is recognised as an Islamic country and confirmation on this can be obtained from the ulama at the international level, Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

"They actually regard Malaysia as a very good model of an Islamic country," he told reporters after opening the Pekan district Youth Week assembly here.

He said the ball was now in the court of PAS leaders who were still vacillating over the difference in interpretation of an Islamic state by PAS and Umno.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad took up PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor's challenge and openly declared that Malaysia was an Islamic country in line with Islamic teachings.

Najib said Dr Mahathir's statement was apt in view that Malaysia was now a sovereign Islamic country.

He said Malaysia was a tolerant and progressive Islamic country which practised Islamic principles and rejected ideologies that opposed Islamic teachings like extremism and use of force.

Besides building the strength of Muslims in the economic, administrative, political and social fields, it also fought for the rights of women, he said.

On another matter, Najib, who is Defence Minister, said officers of his ministry and the Agriculture Ministry had held discussions on the setting up of an agricultural training programme for ex-servicemen.

Under the programme, the Veteran Affairs Department would identify suitable candidates for training to become modern farmers, he said.

Agriculture Minister Datuk Mohamed Effendi Norwawi said yesterday that his ministry was drawing up a special programme to open opportunities to ex-servicemen to join modern agricultural projects, especially those involving food production technology.

-- BERNAMA

ROS JK