

Najib reiterates peace offering to PAS, cites Quran
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has once again offered to forge close ties with PAS, this time by citing Quranic verses on the importance of unity.

Najib, in his speech before he officiated at the regional conference for al-Azhar graduates today, pointed out how Islam stresses the importance of unity and warns against the dangers of discord.

“The Quran has clearly outlined the principles of unity. Like verse 103 of *surah* Ali Imran, ‘hold fast all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you)’,” he said.

Najib said this meant that working together was not an option but compulsory for all Muslims to follow.

“Hold fast to the rope of Allah and not to any other ropes.

“Therefore I, on behalf of my *kabilah* (Umno) and Tuan Guru (Abdul Hadi Awang) who represents his *kabilah*, let’s hold fast to the meaning of this verse,” he said.

Najib’s offer today comes after he extended an olive branch to PAS at the Umno annual general assembly last week.

Meanwhile, Najib expressed confidence that Malaysia would not be like that of countries in the Middle East, where Muslims fight each other.

“Although Islam prioritises unity, Islam also celebrates differences in opinion, what more if they are related to worldly matters,” he said.

Najib in his speech today also reminded everyone how the government had assisted Hadi back in 2010.

"The government had helped Hadi in implementing the trust given by the World Ulama Organisation in peace talks between warring factions in Yemen.

"This is a practical example how unity - regardless of ideology - can occur."

Any issues related to the welfare of the people, said Najib, are worthy factors that can lead to cooperation.

"Implementing an administration in line with *maqasid syariah* (objectives of syariah) should be the deciding factor for Muslims in the country to be united," he said.

Najib, earlier in his speech, also expressed condolences to Hadi for the death of the chief minister's eldest sister, Zainab, who passed away yesterday.

"Even though he (Hadi) is in mourning, he is still committed to joining us together in this event," Najib said.

Meanwhile, PAS Dewan Ulama chief Mahfodz Mohamed praised Najib's speech today, which he said showed the leader of the Malay party was serious in forming close ties with PAS.

Mahfodz, however, said the party has yet to make a decision on the matter.

"We have yet to accept nor have we rejected the offer. I will wait for my president's instructions on the matter; if he said we should discuss, then we will discuss," he told reporters at the sidelines of the event today.