

PM urges youths to help spread message of authentic Islam

MalaysiaKini.com

Nov 26th, 2016

Najib Abdul Razak wants the younger generation to help spread the message of authentic Islam, so that their brothers and sisters are not led astray into darkness and violence.

The prime minister said many of the people who have committed terrorist acts on behalf of Islamic State (IS) were known for their lack of devotion, but were then rapidly radicalised, allowing their anger and frustration to be channelled by a perverted message.

"Some who travelled to join IS actually bought copies of a book titled 'Islam for Dummies'. That sounds like a joke. But it is a hollow, bitter one, that has destroyed the lives of too many.

"The true, authentic Islam would have corrected them. It would have told them that committing atrocities for IS will not redeem their past, sinful lives," he said in his keynote address at Kuala Lumpur International Youth Discourse (KLIYD) 2016 today.

Najib said the true, authentic Islam had built civilisations that were the glory of the world.

"There were citadels of learning and tolerance, where Muslims, Christians and Jews lived and worked, side by side, in harmony," he said.

The event themed 'Empowering Youth for a Safer and Better Future' and participated by some 1,000 youths from around the region was also attended by Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein and Deputy Foreign Minister Reezal Merican Naina Merican.

Najib said Malaysia was far from immune to the problem of terrorism, noting that last June the country had faced the first successful IS-linked attack in Puchong, in which eight people were injured.

He said the government fully recognised the seriousness of this threat and had taken a number of steps to address it, including passing the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act or Sosma, the Special Measures against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Act and the National Security Council Act.

"This is so that we have legislation that allows us to deal with threats promptly and let me be clear, I make no apology for making the security and safety of all Malaysians my first priority," he said.

Apart from misinterpretation of Islam, Najib noted that issues like unemployment, working poverty, disenfranchisement and marginalisation among the young could also lead to the paths of radicalisation.

"We know that young people need channels and opportunities to improve themselves and ensure that no one is left behind, including by the forces of globalisation.

"These issues are also addressed by the plan we put in place after I took office, to reach high income nation status by 2020," he said.

On this, Najib said the country was on track to attract investment needed to keep the economy growing and provide new jobs and high skills training necessary for the younger generation.

The prime minister said the event today with this particular theme was just another part of the government's ongoing efforts to engage the youth in order to hear their voices and respond to their concerns.

"We need your support and participation, which is why I am glad to see so many of you here today to share your thoughts and to discuss ways to forge even better partnerships between government and youth to ensure we remain on the path of peace and harmony," he said.

Najib said the government recognised that young people was the country's most important resource and it had been the solemn responsibility of the government to do all it can to ensure that the decades to come are underpinned by a prosperous, inclusive, secure and happy society.

In fact, he noted that many measures had been announced to help Malaysia's youths in the Budget last month, including extending the 1Malaysia Training Scheme for graduates, tax deductions for companies to support internships for students and the 2050 National Transformation Plan.

"My vision for Malaysia is that we become the best community, the 'khayra ummah', of our age. Help us to realise that most valuable of prizes - to be the best community in God's eyes. That, now, is my challenge to you," he added.

- *Bernama*