



Silat 'warriors' third line of nation's defence: Najib
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Practitioners and members of the silat martial arts can be regarded as the third line of defence prepared to safeguard the nation's sovereignty from enemies, Prime Minister Najib Razak said today.

He said the military and the police were the first line of defence while the Territorial Army was the second.

"Looking at you young people before me today, I feel that I am facing a force of Malay youngsters who are prepared to stand up to any challenge against the nation's sovereignty.

"I consider silat as one of the important forces in the national defence structure," he said at the Aidilfitri celebration of the Silat Seni Gayong Malaysia martial arts association at the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council field near here.

The prime minister called on silat practitioners and the youngsters involved in the movement to excel in the art.

Najib said he wanted them to utilise the silat knowledge and practice as a catalyst for the rise of the race in the 21st century, adding that the success of a civilisation in this century was founded on mental strength and values.

"As such, we have to make the Malay youngsters excel in silat in the 21st century. We should not be silat practitioners who are without any direction," he said.

Political power 'sharper' than keris

The prime minister also said that the sharpest weapon was not the 'keris' (dagger) but political power, and added that only political power provided a future.

"Let's consolidate ourselves because only inherent strength will determine the continuity of our nation," he said.

Najib said the solution to social problems undermining the strength of the Malays was the participation of Malay youngsters in silat.

"We are proud of this heritage (of silat). The Malay world and civilisation are rich in the values inherited over the centuries," he said.

At the event, attended by thousands of silat practitioners from throughout the country, Najib was bestowed the "Sandang Mahkota Seri Bintang Pelangi Imam Khalifah Agong" award of the Silat Seni Gayong Malaysia association of martial arts.

The patron of the association, Negeri Sembilan Menteri Besar Mohamad Hasan, was among those present at the event.

Najib said he was touched by the presentation of the award, and described it as a great honour.

The award is only bestowed on Malay rulers and national and state leaders to symbolise the loyalty of the silat members and students to the leadership and sovereignty of Malaysia.

- Bernama

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