

**Blair: M'sia has good interfaith cooperation**  
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Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair views Malaysia as "having a very good example of interfaith cooperation" in the midst of all the tension in this part of the world.  
MCPX

Speaking to Bernama in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, he said that interfaith dialogues can help address the root causes of terrorism as it reduces ignorance and promotes greater understanding among people of different religions.

He opined that the roots of terrorism could be traced back to injustice, poverty and "specific doctrines of hatred that seize hold of young people's imagination".

"The things that are most dangerous is when religious fanaticism becomes their motivating force in their lives and that's what gives rise to this terrorism," he said.

### **Promoting interfaith dialogues**

The charismatic ex-Labour party leader was in Kuala Lumpur to deliver a lecture on the rule of law at the 22nd Sultan Azlan Shah Law Lecture yesterday, organised by Universiti Malaya.

He has been promoting interfaith dialogues after launching the Tony Blair Faith Foundation in May this year.

tony blairThe foundation, among other things, deals with Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism to promote greater interfaith interaction, dialogue and understanding amongst one another and those without any faith.

It also helps organisations whose object is to counter extremism and promote reconciliation in matters of religious faith.

He pointed out that terrorism is not just restricted to Islam and with understanding and education, there will be less ignorance, hate and conflict.

Blair added that ignorance was also manifested in the West where sometimes a lot of people there do not understand why Muslims feel resentful over attacks against Islamic states and Muslims.

"When people get taught what is actually a perversion of the proper faith, of Islam, which is that Christians are your enemies, then that is very damaging.

"There's a lot of ignorance about what those faiths are. Sometimes in the West, I come across teachings about Islam for example that is really shocking, surprising and not helpful at all and likewise there's a misunderstanding about what Christians and Jews believe," he said.

### **Rescue religious faith**

He also said that terrorist attacks were not the proper faith of Islam at all.

“So, an inter-faith foundation that is built up in educating people of what the truth is about, faiths can actually help significantly diminish the root causes of terrorism,” he said.

Blair noted that one of the main purposes of his foundation was to rescue religious faith from extremism and irrelevance.

He also does not want younger generations, including his own children, perceiving religion as a strange piece of tradition with no relevance for the future.

Blair has been heavily criticised for forming the USA-British coalition force which attacked Iraq that prompted terror groups to unleash their terror attacks in Western soil.

Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad who founded the Perdana Global Peace Organisation (Perdana) had condemned the government’s decision to allow Blair to speak at a local university.

“Blair cannot be regarded as anything but a war criminal,” he said two days ago.

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