

Najib Revives Peace Corps, First Batch to Arrive This Year
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NEW YORK-- The United States has agreed to revive the Peace Corps programme and is expected to send the first batch of 30 volunteers to Malaysia this year, Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak said.

The US Government through the White House has taken action to implement the programme under the Fulbright student exchange programme to teach English in rural areas, he added.

Speaking to Malaysian journalists covering his three-day working visit here, Najib said US Ambassador to Malaysia, Paul Jones, had told him that the programme had been revived and plans were underway to execute it this year.

"They will start with 30...but I have also asked them to send more, if possible, 100 or 200 volunteers, especially to rural areas. I asked for more because there are many rural schools in Malaysia," he added. However, it would not be a regional peace corps, he said.

The proposal to revive the Peace Corps programme, which was popular in the 1960s, was made by Najib when he and other Asean leaders met US President Barack Obama during the United Nations General Assembly in New York last September.

It is an American volunteer programme that aims to provide technical assistance, helping foreigners understand US culture and helping Americans understand the cultures of other countries.

At the meeting with Obama, Najib proposed that the US-sponsored Peace Corps be introduced to help raise proficiency in the English language among the peoples of Asean countries.

Obama's late mother, Ann Dunham, was reported to have taught English in Indonesia.

Najib was also asked about the conditions of former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad who was admitted to the National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Najib said he was told that Dr Mahathir was stable.

"I pray that Tun recovers and be back to normal and continue to contribute to the nation."

(Bernama)

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