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PM: Always respect others

Be mindful of religious sensitivities for peace and harmony, youths told

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has advised youths to always show respect for religious sensitivities, reminding them that Malaysia can only become an advanced country if there is peace and harmony among its people.

Reiterating his commitment to protect the interests of all Malaysians, the Prime Minister said the country would remain successful so long as there was mutual respect.

"Let those from outside say what they want. As Prime Minister, I am responsible to the people of Malaysia and I want to do the best to protect the peace and harmony of our country because these are our foundation.

"We cannot talk about the future and of being an advanced economy when our own household is not peaceful and harmonious," Najib said when opening the



Warm reception: Najib shaking hands with the delegates and guests during the Malaysian Youth Council's 63rd annual general meeting.

Malaysian Youth Council's 63rd annual general meeting here yesterday.

Referring to the killing of nine journalists at French publication

Charlie Hebdo, Najib said that while the act could not be justified, more should be done to promote greater sensitivity towards religions.

"If Muslims have sensitivities, Christians, Hindus and Buddhists, too, have their particular sensitivities.

"If we all understand this, I believe Malaysia will continue to remain peaceful and successful," he said.

Najib wanted youth associations to find new and effective ways to engage their target audience and listen to their aspirations.

To better equip youths for the job market, he said the current review of the national service curriculum would identify useful skills that would be introduced to participants.

"I have asked the ministers of Youth and Sports as well as Defence to draw up a new national service curriculum whereby the participants will not only be trained to be more disciplined and patriotic but will be given new skills as well," added Najib.

Earlier, in his speech, Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin

said youths should value moderation as the country was now facing the threat of religious and social extremism.

While some youths were taken in by the views of Islamic State-linked militants, others had gone in the extreme opposite direction, practising hedonistic lifestyles not in line with their cultural and religious values, he said.

Khairy praised the Youth Council for its firm belief in the principle of moderation, which he said was in line with the Prime Minister's policy of *wasatiyyah* (moderation) and 1Malaysia.

"We must uphold moderation because we want to ensure Malaysian youths are not pulled away by extremist ideas, be it ultra-conservative or ultra-liberal," he said.

"We want to see our youths remaining in the middle ground so that we can build a Malaysia that can be accepted by everyone in society regardless of race or religion."