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PM: Malaysia must be firm

'Authorities must not be apologetic when using preventive laws'

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KUALA LUMPUR: The authorities should not be apologetic when using preventive laws to ensure there are no terror attacks in Malaysia, said the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Prevention of Terrorism Act, to be tabled in Parliament soon by Home Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, was needed to curb violent extremism.

"I believe that preventive laws are better than allowing an individual or group to actually carry out an attack," he said at the launch of the

208th Police Day celebrations at the Police Training Centre (Pulapol) here yesterday.

"We must ensure that there is no terror act in our country, thus we should not be apologetic. Some may say that it is undemocratic but I want to say there is no absolute freedom; absolute freedom without responsibility has no place in our country."

Najib vowed that the Government would not use the new law for political means, thus the power to detain was not given to any member of the administration.

"Instead, it (the power to detain) is placed under a credible body so that only those who are really involved

in violent extremism are detained under this law," he said.

He said threats of terror groups, including that of the Islamic State, were real.

"Such groups act without any mercy. They will do anything based on their misguided beliefs."

Najib said Malaysia placed priority on racial and religious harmony, which was why the Sedition Act should be strengthened.

He reminded everyone that seditious statements made over social media could lead to an eruption of ill-feeling among the rakyat.

"However, I have faith that the police will be able to overcome these

new challenges in a versatile and flexible manner," he said.

Najib also labelled those who insulted the police as an irresponsible bunch. "Malaysians should not disrespect or look down on the police. They (the police) are the reason that we are able to live in peace and without fear," he said.

Najib said a strong and prosperous nation should have four important pillars - a vibrant economy, a stable political scenario, strong unity among people of all races and religions, and safety and security.

"If you ask me, I would say that safety and security is most important," he added.