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**T**HE Malay traditional martial art of silat promotes a healthy lifestyle and should be passed down to the younger generation at public learning institutions, as well as in villages and neighbourhoods, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"Silat forms a solid defence against external threats, be it from social ills and drug problems to the growing menace of Islamic State (IS)," said Najib, whose speech was read by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Shahidan Kassim at the launch of Rumah Gayung of Persatuan Seni Silat Gayung Malaysia (PSSGM) here yesterday.

Najib said silat gayong practitioners were equipped with strong Islamic teachings and were taught to be loyal to the country, their parents and teachers.

"This form of traditional martial

art must be bolstered as our third line of defence. This is to ensure the country's security and stability."

The new building, which houses the Malaysian Seni Silat Gayong Association (PSSGM) headquarters, should serve to motivate silat gayong practitioners to excel in their endeavours and spur the growth of the traditional art form among the younger generation, he said.

Najib, who is also PSSGM's Khalifah Agong, also called on silat gayong practitioners to promote the traditional Malay martial arts to the people abroad.

He hoped the new building would spur the growth of silat gayong through its programmes and activities.

Present were National Silat Federation (Pesaka) chairman Tan Sri Mohd Ali Rustam, Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad and Selangor S Umno liaison chairman Datuk Seri Noh

*This form of traditional martial art must be bolstered as our third line of defence.*

*Datuk Seri Najib Razak prime minister*

Omar.

PSSGM chairman Datuk Adiwijaya Abdullah said the new building would be able to carry out more silat activities.

PSSGM has more than 50,000 members nationwide.

In September, Najib named silat as Malaysia's official martial arts during a mass gathering of silat practitioners organised by Pesaka at Dataran Merdeka.